POWERFUL TRAITS FOR CHRISTIAN LEADERS

101 INSIGHTS ON THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT AND CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP

COMPILED BY DELBERT AND SUSAN BAKER

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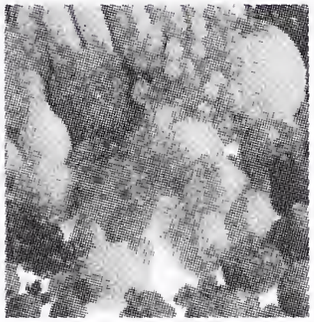

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This QuoteBook, Powerful Traits for Christian Leaders, is the seventh in the 101 QuoteBook Series annually prepared for Oakwood College graduates. Quotebook titles include: *Thoughts for the Journey* (1999), *The Satisfaction of Service* (2000), *The Success Workbook* (2001), *The Coping Workbook* (2002), *The Help-Yourself ListBook* (2003), *Healthy Habits* (2004); and *Powerful Traits for Christian Leaders* (2005). Each of the quotebooks can be found at the Oakwood College website: www.oakwood.edu/goldmine/quotebook.

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LETTER TO GRADUATES

Dear Graduat and Reader,

Congratulations for completing this phase of your educational journey. Our prayers and support are with you as you move forward.

This QuoteBook is the seventh in the annual QuoteBook Series for graduating seniors. This year the title is *Powerful Traits for Christian Leaders.* It covers the Fruit of the Spirit listed in Galatians, a subject which fits comfortably with the now popular field of Emotional Intelligence. If you have the Fruit of the Spirit, wherever you go, whatever you do, you will be a success. No law, policy, rule, or guideline can stop you because you are using heaven's secrets for emotional intelligence!

So take the time to carefully read through this book and do the exercises at the end of each section. With God's help, implement these traits into practice and experience the difference. While Emotional Intelligence is a helpful system for understanding and managing your emotions and responding to the emotions of others, the powerful principles of the Fruit of the Spirit as outlined in the Word of God connect you with something far more powerful and effectual–the Holy Spirit!

As you leave Oakwood College, remember to preserve the legacy and live up to our aim, "Education, Excellence, Eternity," and our motto, "Enter to Learn, Depart to Serve."

May God's richest blessings and success be with you.

Very sincerely,

President and Mrs. Delbert W. Baker
May 2005

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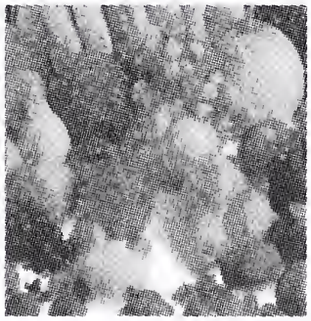


Contemplation on Fruit

It's quiet. It's early. My tea is hot.
The sky is still black. The world is still asleep.
The day is coming.

In a few moments the day will arrive. It will roar down the track with the rising of the sun. The stillness of the dawn will be exchanged for the noise of the day. The calm of the solitude will be replaced by the pounding pace of the human race. The refuge of the early morning will be invaded by decisions to be made and deadlines to be met.

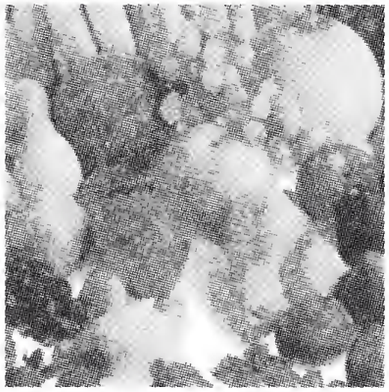
Max Lucado

Choosing to Choose

For the next twelve hours I will be exposed to the day's demands. It is now that I must make a choice. Because of Calvary, I'm free to choose. And so I choose.

Max Lucado

Chapter 1



LOVE
First Fruit of the Spirit

The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

GALATIANS 5:22, 23 (NIV)

DEFINITION:

Greek–agape; a strong positive feeling toward somebody; a principled commitment and/or compassion; a devotion for.

SYNONYMS:

affection, adoration, fondness, passion, ardor.

INSIGHT:

Love, as described by Paul, is a more excellent way for the Christian. Love is more important than tongues or even preaching. Although modern culture equates love with physical pleasure and satisfaction, the Bible commands that love be shown through acts that place the other above oneself. The highest calling for the Christian is to love.

1. LOVE ACCEPTS AND FORGIVES

(Luke 15:11-24, NIV)

Jesus continued: "There was a man who had two sons. The younger one said to his father, 'Father, give me my share of the estate.' So he divided his property between them.

"Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living. After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything.

"When he came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired men have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired men.' So he got up and went to his father.

"But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.

"The son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.'

"But the father said to his servants, 'Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring

the fattened calf and kill it. Let's have a feast and celebrate. For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' So they began to celebrate.

"Meanwhile, the older son was in the field. When he came near the house, he heard music and dancing. So he called one of the servants and asked him what was going on. 'Your brother has come,' he replied, 'and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.'

"The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him. But he answered his father, 'Look! All these years I've been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends. But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!'

"'My son,' the father said, 'you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.'"

2. LOVE IS EMOTIONALLY INTELLIGENT

(1 Corinthians 13, MsgB)

If I speak with human eloquence and angelic ecstasy but don't love, I'm nothing but the creaking of a rusty gate. If I speak God's Word with power, revealing all his mysteries and making everything plain as day,

and if I have faith that says to a mountain, "Jump," and it jumps, but I don't love, I'm nothing. If I give everything I own to the poor and even go to the stake to be burned as a martyr, but I don't love, I've gotten nowhere. So, no matter what I say, what I believe, and what I do, I'm bankrupt without love.

Love never gives up. Love cares more for others than for self. Love doesn't want what it doesn't have. Love doesn't strut, Doesn't have a swelled head, Doesn't force itself on others, Isn't always "me first," Doesn't fly off the handle, Doesn't keep score of the sins of others, Doesn't revel when others grovel, Takes pleasure in the flowering of truth, Puts up with anything, Trusts God always, Always looks for the best, Never looks back, But keeps going to the end.

Love never dies. Inspired speech will be over some day; praying in tongues will end; understanding will reach its limit. We know only a portion of the truth, and what we say about God is always incomplete. But when the Complete arrives, our incompletes will be canceled.

When I was an infant at my mother's breast, I gurgled and cooed like any infant. When I grew up, I left those infant ways for good. We don't yet see things clearly. We're squinting in a fog, peering through a mist. But it won't be long before the weather clears and the sun shines bright! We'll see it all then, see it all as clearly as God sees us, knowing him directly just as he knows us!

But for right now, until that completeness, we have three things to do to lead us toward that consummation: Trust steadily in God, hope unswervingly, love extravagantly. And the best of the three is love.

3. LOVE IS WILDLY REDEMPTIVE

(Hosea 3:1-3, TLB)

Then the Lord said to me, "Go, and get your wife again and bring her back to you and love her, even though she loves adultery. For the Lord still loves Israel though she has turned to other gods and offered them choice gifts." So I bought her back from her slavery for a couple of dollars and eight bushels of barley, and I said to her, "You must live alone for many days; do not go out with other men nor be a prostitute, and I will wait for you."

4. LOVE GOES THE EXTRA MILE

(Luke 10:25-37, GW)

Then an expert in Moses' Teachings stood up to test Jesus. He asked, "Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus answered him, "What is written in Moses' Teachings? What do you read there?" He answered, "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind.' And 'Love your neighbor as you love yourself.'"

Jesus told him, "You're right! Do this, and life will be yours." But the man wanted to justify his question. So he asked Jesus, "Who is my neighbor?"

Jesus replied, "A man went from Jerusalem to Jericho. On the way robbers stripped him, beat him, and left him for dead. By chance, a

priest was traveling along that road. When he saw the man, he went around him and continued on his way. Then a Levite came to that place. When he saw the man, he, too, went around him and continued on his way.

But a Samaritan, as he was traveling along, came across the man. When the Samaritan saw him, he felt sorry for the man, went to him, and cleaned and bandaged his wounds. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. The next day the Samaritan took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper. He told the innkeeper, 'Take care of him. If you spend more than that, I'll pay you on my return trip.'

Of these three men, who do you think was a neighbor to the man who was attacked by robbers?" The expert said, "The one who was kind enough to help him." Jesus told him, "Go and imitate his example!"

5. LOVE IS DILIGENT

(Joshua 23:10-16, MsgB)

Think of it—one of you, single-handedly, putting a thousand on the run! Because God is God, your God. Because he fights for you, just as he promised you.

Now, vigilantly guard your souls: Love God, your God. Because if you wander off and start taking up with these remaining nations still among you (intermarry, say, and have other dealings with them), know for certain that God, your God, will not get rid of these nations for you.

They'll be nothing but trouble to you—horsewhips on your backs and sand in your eyes—until you're the ones who will be driven out of this good land that God, your God, has given you.

As you can see, I'm about to go the way we all end up going. Know this with all your heart, with everything in you, that not one detail has failed of all the good things God, your God, promised you. It has all happened. Nothing's left undone—not so much as a word.

But just as sure as everything good that God, your God, has promised has come true, so also God will bring to pass every bad thing until there's nothing left of you in this good land that God has given you. If you leave the path of the Covenant of God, your God, that he commanded you, go off and serve and worship other gods, God's anger will blaze out against you. In no time at all there'll be nothing left of you, no sign that you've ever been in this good land he gave you.

6. LOVE IS BOLD AND INCLUSIVE

(1 John 4:16-18, NIV)

God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him. In this way, love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment, because in this world we are like him. There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love.

We love because he first loved us. If anyone says, “I love God,” yet

hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen. And he has given us this command: Whoever loves God must also love his brother.

7. LOVE IS POWERFUL

(Romans 8:35-39, TLB)

Who then can ever keep Christ's love from us? When we have trouble or calamity, when we are hunted down or destroyed, is it because he doesn't love us anymore? And if we are hungry or penniless or in danger or threatened with death, has God deserted us?

No, for the Scriptures tell us that for his sake we must be ready to face death at every moment of the day—we are like sheep awaiting slaughter; but despite all this, overwhelming victory is ours through Christ who loved us enough to die for us.

For I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from his love. Death can't, and life can't. The angels won't, and all the powers of hell itself cannot keep God's love away. Our fears for today, our worries about tomorrow, or where we are—high above the sky, or in the deepest ocean—nothing will ever be able to separate us from the love of God demonstrated by our Lord Jesus Christ when he died for us.

8. LOVE IS INTERACTIVE

(John 21:15-17, GW)

After they had eaten breakfast, Jesus asked Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love me more than the other disciples do?" Peter answered him, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you." Jesus told him, "Feed my lambs."

Jesus asked him again, a second time, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" Peter answered him, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you." Jesus told him, "Take care of my sheep."

Jesus asked him a third time, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" Peter felt sad because Jesus had asked him a third time, "Do you love me?" So Peter said to him, "Lord, you know everything. You know that I love you." Jesus told him, "Feed my sheep."

9. LOVE PRODUCES GOOD OUTCOMES

(Romans 8:26-28, NKJV)

Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God. And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.

10. LOVE IS REWARDING

(1 Corinthians 2:9-14, GW)

As Scripture says: 'No eye has seen, no ear has heard, and no mind has imagined the things that God has prepared for those who love him.' God has revealed those things to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches everything, especially the deep things of God. After all, who knows everything about a person except that person's own spirit? In the same way, no one has known everything about God except God's Spirit.

Now, we didn't receive the spirit that belongs to the world. Instead, we received the Spirit who comes from God so that we could know the things which God has freely given us. We don't speak about these things using teachings that are based on intellectual arguments like people do. Instead, we use the Spirit's teachings. We explain spiritual things to those who have the Spirit.

A person who isn't spiritual doesn't accept the teachings of God's Spirit. He thinks they're nonsense. He can't understand them because a person must be spiritual to evaluate them.

Thank God every morning when you get up that you have something to do which must be done, whether you like it or not.

Charles Kingsley

APPLICATION: MAKING LOVE A PART OF ME

PERSONAL INVENTORY

1. Define Love in your own words.

2. It has been said that Love is the most important of the nine Fruit of the Spirit. Do you think this is true? Why?

3. Rate how important Love is to you.

❑ Not Important ❑ Average Importance ❑ Very Important

4. Honestly evaluate yourself in light of Love and score yourself on this trait (check one).

❑ I am not loving at all–I constantly struggle with love.
❑ I generally am not loving–but sometimes I manage to show love.
❑ I am loving most of the time–I feel comfortable with love.
❑ I am loving all of the time–love is one of my strengths.

5. Based on the insights in this section and your own knowledge of Love, how can you increase this trait in your life?

6. If you were to ask God for more Love, exactly what would you ask Him for?

7. Can you think of any positives if you more actively incorporate Love in your life?

8. Can you think of any negatives if you don't incorporate Love in your life?

9. Emotional Intelligence (EI) is understanding and managing your own emotions and being sensitive to and successfully responding to the emotions of other people. Briefly explain how Love can help in this process.

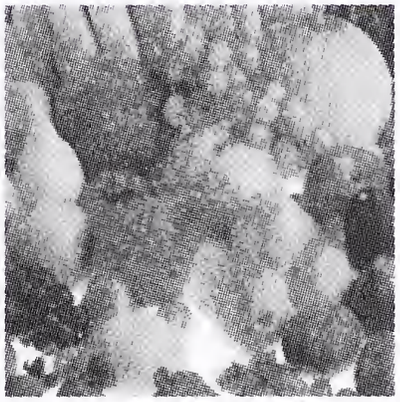
10. Share this Personal Fruit Inventory with significant persons in your life. Seek their honest opinion and feedback. How did they respond to these queries? Did they agree or disagree with your assessment? Did they have any suggestions or concerns?

Choose Joy

I choose joy. I will invite my God to be the God of circumstance. I will refuse the temptation to be cynical...the tool of the lazy thinker. I will refuse to see people as anything less than human beings, created by God. I will refuse to see any problem as anything less than an opportunity to see God.

Max Lucado

Chapter 2



JOY
Second Fruit of the Spirit

The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

Galatians 5:22, 23 (NIV)

DEFINITION:

Greek–chara; emotional and intellectual delight; feelings of great happiness or pleasure; something that creates a positive sense of well-being and contentment.

SYNONYMS:

happiness, gladness, delight, pleasure, enjoyment, elation, rapture

INSIGHT:

Joy is the happy state that results from knowing and serving God. It is the fruit of a right relation with God and not something people can create by their own efforts. Joy is not found in the philosophy of hedonism, self-centered pleasure seeking, but rather in the satisfaction that comes from a committed life.

11. JOY IS A DELIBERATE CHOICE

(Habakkuk 3:17-18, NIV)

Though the fig tree does not bud and there are no grapes on the vines, though the olive crop fails and the fields produce no food, though there are no sheep in the pen and no cattle in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will be joyful in God my Savior.

12. JOY IS A UNIVERSAL ACTIVITY

(Psalm 103:20-22, NKJV)

Bless the LORD, you His angels, who excel in strength, who do His word, heeding the voice of His word. Bless the LORD, all you His hosts, you ministers of His, who do His pleasure. Bless the LORD, all His works; in all places of His dominion. Bless the LORD, O my soul!

13. JOY OFTEN FOLLOWS A BREAKTHROUGH

(Esther 8:10-17, GW)

Mordecai wrote in King Xerxes' name and sealed the official documents with the king's signet ring. Then he sent them by messengers who rode special horses bred for speed. [He wrote] that the king had given permission for the Jews in every city to assemble, to defend themselves, to wipe out, to kill, and to destroy every armed force of the people and province that is hostile to them, even women and children, and to seize their goods. [This was permitted] on one day in all the

provinces of King Xerxes, on the thirteenth day of Adar, the twelfth month. The copy of the document was made public in a decree to every province for all people. On that day the Jews were to be ready to take revenge on their enemies.

The messengers rode the king's fastest horses. They left quickly, in keeping with the king's command. The decree was issued also in the fortress of Susa. Mordecai went out from the presence of the king wearing the royal violet and white robe, a large gold crown, and a purple outer robe of fine linen. And the city of Susa cheered and rejoiced.

So the Jews were cheerful, happy, joyful, and successful. In every province and every city where the king's message and decree arrived, the Jews were happy and joyful, feasting and enjoying a holiday. Then many common people pretended to be Jews because they were terrified of the Jews.

14. JOY IS REVEALED IN CREATION

(Psalm 19:1-6, TLB)

The heavens are telling the glory of God; they are a marvelous display of his craftsmanship. Day and night they keep on telling about God. Without a sound or word, silent in the skies, their message reaches out to all the world. The sun lives in the heavens where God placed it and moves out across the skies as radiant as a bridegroom going to his wedding, or as joyous as an athlete looking forward to a race! The sun crosses the heavens from end to end, and nothing can hide from

its heat.

15. JOY RESULTS FROM ACCEPTANCE OF CHRIST

(Romans 14:13-18, NIV)

Therefore let us stop passing judgment on one another. Instead, make up your mind not to put any stumbling block or obstacle in your brother's way. As one who is in the Lord Jesus, I am fully convinced that no food is unclean in itself. But if anyone regards something as unclean, then for him it is unclean. If your brother is distressed because of what you eat, you are no longer acting in love. Do not by your eating destroy your brother for whom Christ died.

Do not allow what you consider good to be spoken of as evil. For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit, because anyone who serves Christ in this way is pleasing to God and approved by men.

16. JOY RESULTS FROM A SPIRITUAL FORMULA

(Philippians 4:4-14, 23, MsgB)

Celebrate God all day, every day. I mean, revel in him! Make it as clear as you can to all you meet that you're on their side, working with them and not against them. Help them see that the Master is about to arrive. He could show up any minute!

Don't fret or worry. Instead of worrying, pray. Let petitions and

praises shape your worries into prayers, letting God know your concerns. Before you know it, a sense of God's wholeness, everything coming together for good, will come and settle you down. It's wonderful what happens when Christ displaces worry at the center of your life.

Summing it all up, friends, I'd say you'll do best by filling your minds and meditating on things true, noble, reputable, authentic, compelling, gracious—the best, not the worst; the beautiful, not the ugly; things to praise, not things to curse. Put into practice what you learned from me, what you heard and saw and realized. Do that, and God, who makes everything work together, will work you into his most excellent harmonies.

I'm glad in God, far happier than you would ever guess—happy that you're again showing such strong concern for me. Not that you ever quit praying and thinking about me. You just had no chance to show it. Actually, I don't have a sense of needing anything personally. I've learned by now to be quite content whatever my circumstances. I'm just as happy with little as with much, with much as with little. I've found the recipe for being happy whether full or hungry, hands full or hands empty. Whatever I have, wherever I am, I can make it through anything in the One who makes me who I am. I don't mean that your help didn't mean a lot to me—it did. It was a beautiful thing that you came alongside me in my troubles.

Receive and experience the amazing grace of the Master, Jesus Christ, deep, deep within yourselves.

17. JOY COMES FROM KNOWING, LOVING CHRIST

(1 Peter 1:3-9, 13-17, 22, GW)

Praise the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! God has given us a new birth because of his great mercy. We have been born into a new life that has a confidence which is alive because Jesus Christ has come back to life. We have been born into a new life which has an inheritance that can't be destroyed or corrupted and can't fade away. That inheritance is kept in heaven for you, since you are guarded by God's power through faith for a salvation that is ready to be revealed at the end of time.

You are extremely happy about these things, even though you have to suffer different kinds of trouble for a little while now. The purpose of these troubles is to test your faith as fire tests how genuine gold is. Your faith is more precious than gold, and by passing the test, it gives praise, glory, and honor to God. This will happen when Jesus Christ appears again.

Although you have never seen Christ, you love him. You don't see him now, but you believe in him. You are extremely happy with joy and praise that can hardly be expressed in words as you obtain the salvation that is the goal of your faith.

Therefore, your minds must be clear and ready for action. Place your confidence completely in what God's kindness will bring you when Jesus Christ appears again. Because you are children who obey God, don't live the kind of lives you once lived. Once you lived to satisfy your desires because you didn't know any better. But because the

God who called you is holy you must be holy in every aspect of your life. Scripture says, "Be holy, because I am holy." So if you call God your Father, live your time as temporary residents on earth in fear. He is the God who judges all people by what they have done, and he doesn't play favorites.

Love each other with a warm love that comes from the heart. After all, you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth. As a result you have a sincere love for each other.

18. JOY COMES FROM FORGIVENESS

(Psalm 51:1-19, MsgB)

[This is the joy David expressed after he received forgiveness from God for his sin with Bathsheba.]

Generous in love—God, give grace! Huge in mercy—wipe out my bad record. Scrub away my guilt, soak out my sins in your laundry. I know how bad I've been; my sins are staring me down. You're the One I've violated, and you've seen it all, seen the full extent of my evil. You have all the facts before you; whatever you decide about me is fair. I've been out of step with you for a long time, in the wrong since before I was born.

What you're after is truth from the inside out. Enter me, then; conceive a new, true life. Soak me in your laundry and I'll come out clean, scrub me and I'll have a snow-white life. Tune me in to foot-tapping songs, set these once-broken bones to dancing. Don't look too close

for blemishes, give me a clean bill of health.

God, make a fresh start in me, shape a Genesis week from the chaos of my life. Don't throw me out with the trash, or fail to breathe holiness in me. Bring me back from gray exile, put a fresh wind in my sails! Give me a job teaching rebels your ways so the lost can find their way home. Commute my death sentence, God, my salvation God, and I'll sing anthems to your life giving ways. Unbutton my lips, dear God; I'll let loose with your praise. Going through the motions doesn't please you, a flawless performance is nothing to you.

I learned God-worship when my pride was shattered. Heart-shattered lives ready for love don't for a moment escape God's notice. Make Zion the place you delight in, repair Jerusalem's broken-down walls. Then you'll get real worship from us, acts of worship small and large, including all the bulls they can heave onto your altar!

19. JOY COMES FROM THE WORD OF GOD

(Jeremiah 15:16-21, CW)

When your words came to me, I ate them with joy. They were the delight of my heart. I accepted them because I wanted to bear your name and be known as yours. I didn't enjoy the company of those who mock your word. I couldn't rejoice with them when they laughed at what you had said. I sat alone because your hand was upon me, and you filled my heart with indignation over what I heard them say about you.

Why does this have to go on and on? Why does my spirit have to

keep suffering over what I hear? Why does my heart have to be in constant pain? Will your presence in Israel be like a stream that goes dry in the summer or like a spring that fails when we need it?" The Lord answered, "If you repent of your complaining, I'll help you. If you talk positively and say things that are worthwhile instead of talking sadly and saying things that don't accomplish anything, then you'll continue to be my spokesman. The people need to come over to your side. Don't feel so sorry for them that you go over to their side.

I will make you like a fortified wall. The people will fight against you, but will not be able to break you down and destroy you. I will be with you and deliver you. I will save you from the hands of the wicked and rescue you from those who would kill you. I, the Lord, have spoken."

20. JOY IN TRIALS CAN BE ENCOURAGED BY KINDNESS

(2 Corinthians 7:1-7, TLB)

Having such great promises as these, dear friends, let us turn away from everything wrong, whether of body or spirit, and purify ourselves, living in the wholesome fear of God, giving ourselves to him alone. Please open your hearts to us again, for not one of you has suffered any wrong from us. Not one of you was led astray. We have cheated no one nor taken advantage of anyone. I'm not saying this to scold or blame you, for, as I have said before, you are in my heart forever, and I live and die with you. I have the highest confidence in you, and my

pride in you is great. You have greatly encouraged me; you have made me so happy in spite of all my suffering.

When we arrived in Macedonia there was no rest for us; outside, trouble was on every hand and all around us; within us, our hearts were full of dread and fear. Then God who cheers those who are discouraged refreshed us by the arrival of Titus. Not only was his presence a joy, but also the news that he brought of the wonderful time he had with you. When he told me how much you were looking forward to my visit, and how sorry you were about what had happened, and about your loyalty and warm love for me, well, I overflowed with joy!

Happiness depends on what happens:

joy does not.

Oswald Chambers

MAKING JOY A PART OF ME

PERSONAL INVENTORY

1. Define Joy in your own words.

2. Assuming that Love is the most important of the nine Fruit of the Spirit, of the remaining eight traits, what ranking do you give Joy?

3. Rate how important Joy is to you.
❑ Not Important ❑ Average Importance ❑ Very Important

4. Honestly evaluate yourself in light of Joy and score yourself on this trait (check one).
❑ I am not joyful at all–I constantly struggle with having joy.
❑ I generally am not joyful–but sometimes I manage to have joy.
❑ I am joyful most of the time–I feel comfortable with having joy.
❑ I am joyful all of the time–joy is one of my strengths.

5. Based on the insights in this section and your own knowledge of Joy, how can you increase this trait in your life?

6. If you were to ask God for more Joy, exactly what would you ask Him for?

7. Can you think of any positives if you more actively incorporate Joy in your life?

8. Can you think of any negatives if you don't incorporate Joy in your life?

9. Emotional Intelligence (EI) is understanding and managing your own emotions and being sensitive to and successfully responding to the emotions of other people. Briefly explain how Joy can help in this process.

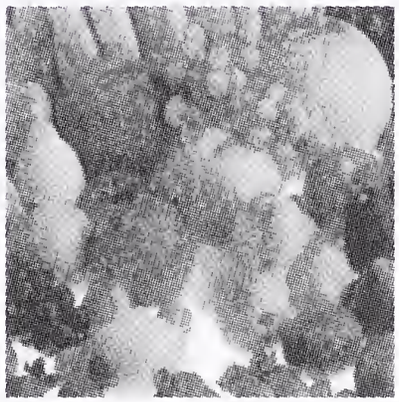
10. Share this Personal Fruit Inventory with significant persons in your life. Seek their honest opinion and feedback. How did they respond to these queries? Did they agree or disagree with your assessment? Did they have any suggestions or concerns?

Choose Peace

I choose peace. I will live forgiven.
I will forgive so that I may live.

Max Lucado

Chapter 3



PEACE
Third Fruit of the Spirit

The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

GALATIANS 5:22, 23 (NIV)

DEFINITION:

Greek–eirene; a state of quietness, rest and response; security in the midst of turmoil, strife and temptation; a state of mental calm and serenity, with no anxiety; having harmony; freedom from conflict or disagreement among people or groups

SYNONYMS:

concord, harmony, reconciliation, accord, goodwill, security

INSIGHT:

Peace is a sense of well-being and fulfillment that comes from God and is dependent on His presence. It expresses the idea of well being, restoration, reconciliation with God, and salvation in the fullest sense. The concept of spiritual peace encompasses the inner experience of the believer. Spiritual peace flows from being rightly related—rightly related to God and rightly related to one another.

21. PEACE AND JOY ARE INFECTIOUS

(1 Thessalonians 1:4-10, MsgB)

It is clear to us, friends, that God not only loves you very much but also has put his hand on you for something special. When the Message we preached came to you, it wasn't just words. Something happened in you. The Holy Spirit put steel in your convictions.

You paid careful attention to the way we lived among you, and determined to live that way yourselves. In imitating us, you imitated the Master. Although great trouble accompanied the Word, you were able to take great joy from the Holy Spirit!—taking the trouble with the joy, the joy with the trouble.

Do you know that all over the provinces of both Macedonia and Achaia believers look up to you? The word has gotten around. Your lives are echoing the Master's Word, not only in the provinces but all over the place. The news of your faith in God is out. We don't even have to say anything anymore—you're the message! People come up and tell us how you received us with open arms, how you deserted the dead idols of your old life so you could embrace and serve God, the true God. They marvel at how expectantly you await the arrival of his Son, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescued us from certain doom.

22. PEACE CAN BE ACHIEVED IN ANY SITUATION

(Mark 4:35-41, KJV)

And the same day, when the even was come, he saith unto them, Let us pass over unto the other side. And when they had sent away the multitude, they took him even as he was in the ship. And there were also with him other little ships.

And there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full. And he was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow: and they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish? And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith? And they feared exceedingly, and said one to another, What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?

23. PEACE COMES THROUGH SUFFERING

(Isaiah 53:1-5, GW)

Who has believed our message? To whom has the Lord's power been revealed? He grew up in his presence like a young tree, like a root out of dry ground.

He had no form or majesty that would make us look at him. He had nothing in his appearance that would make us desire him. He was

despised and rejected by people. He was a man of sorrows, familiar with suffering.

He was despised like one from whom people turn their faces, and we didn't consider him to be worth anything. He certainly has taken upon himself our suffering and carried our sorrows, but we thought that God had wounded him, beat him, and punished him.

He was wounded for our rebellious acts. He was crushed for our sins. He was punished so that we could have peace, and we received healing from his wounds.

24. PEACE MEANS REMOVING WALLS

(Ephesians 2:14-20, NKJV)

For He Himself [Christ] is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near. For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father.

Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus

Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

25. PEACE COMES THROUGH CHRIST

(Romans 5:1-11, NIV)

Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us.

You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous man, though for a good man someone might possibly dare to die. But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him! For if, when we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his

Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life! Not only is this so, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

26. PEACE AND FAME COME FROM FAITH

(Hebrews 11:1-14, MsgB)

The fundamental fact of existence is that this trust in God, this faith, is the firm foundation under everything that makes life worth living. It's our handle on what we can't see. The act of faith is what distinguished our ancestors, set them above the crowd.

By faith, we see the world called into existence by God's word, what we see created by what we don't see. By an act of faith, Abel brought a better sacrifice to God than Cain. It was what he believed, not what he brought, that made the difference. That's what God noticed and approved as righteous. After all these centuries, that belief continues to catch our notice.

By an act of faith, Enoch skipped death completely. "They looked all over and couldn't find him because God had taken him." We know on the basis of reliable testimony that before he was taken he pleased God. It's impossible to please God apart from faith. And why? Because anyone who wants to approach God must believe both that he exists and that he cares enough to respond to those who seek him.

By faith, Noah built a ship in the middle of dry land. He was warned about something he couldn't see, and acted on what he was told. The result? His family was saved. His act of faith drew a sharp line between the evil of the unbelieving world and the rightness of the believing world. As a result, Noah became intimate with God.

By an act of faith, Abraham said yes to God's call to travel to an unknown place that would become his home. When he left he had no idea where he was going. By an act of faith he lived in the country promised him, lived as a stranger camping in tents. Isaac and Jacob did the same, living under the same promise. Abraham did it by keeping his eye on an unseen city with real, eternal foundations—the City designed and built by God.

By faith, barren Sarah was able to become pregnant, old woman as she was at the time, because she believed the One who made a promise would do what he said. That's how it happened that from one man's dead and shriveled loins there are now people numbering into the millions.

Each one of these people of faith died not yet having in hand what was promised, but still believing. How did they do it? They saw it way off in the distance, waved their greeting, and accepted the fact that they were transients in this world. People who live this way make it plain that they are looking for their true home. If they were homesick for the old country, they could have gone back any time they wanted. But they were after a far better country than that—heaven country. You can see why God is so proud of them, and has a City waiting for them.

By faith, Abraham, at the time of testing, offered Isaac back to God. Acting in faith, he was as ready to return the promised son, his only son, as he had been to receive him—and this after he had already been told, "Your descendants shall come from Isaac." Abraham figured that if God wanted to, he could raise the dead. In a sense, that's what happened when he received Isaac back, alive from off the altar.

By an act of faith, Isaac reached into the future as he blessed Jacob and Esau. By an act of faith, Jacob on his deathbed blessed each of Joseph's sons in turn, blessing them with God's blessing, not his own—as he bowed worshipfully upon his staff. By an act of faith, Joseph, while dying, prophesied the exodus of Israel, and made arrangements for his own burial.

By an act of faith, Moses' parents hid him away for three months after his birth. They saw the child's beauty, and they braved the king's decree. By faith, Moses, when grown, refused the privileges of the Egyptian royal house. He chose a hard life with God's people rather than an opportunistic soft life of sin with the oppressors. He valued suffering in the Messiah's camp far greater than Egyptian wealth because he was looking ahead, anticipating the payoff. By an act of faith, he turned his heel on Egypt, indifferent to the king's blind rage. He had his eye on the One no eye can see, and kept right on going. By an act of faith, he kept the Passover Feast and sprinkled Passover blood on each house so that the destroyer of the firstborn wouldn't touch them. By an act of faith, Israel walked through the Red Sea on dry ground. The Egyptians tried it and drowned.

By faith, the Israelites marched around the walls of Jericho for

seven days, and the walls fell flat. By an act of faith, Rahab, the Jericho harlot, welcomed the spies and escaped the destruction that came on those who refused to trust God.

I could go on and on, but I've run out of time. There are so many more—Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, Samuel, the prophets. Through acts of faith, they toppled kingdoms, made justice work, took the promises for themselves. They were protected from lions, fires, and sword thrusts, turned disadvantage to advantage, won battles, routed alien armies.

27. PEACE IS A DIVINE-HUMAN TRANSACTION

(Isaiah 26:3-12, MsgB)

People with their minds set on you, you keep completely whole, steady on their feet, because they keep at it and don't quit. Depend on God and keep at it because in the Lord God you have a sure thing. Those who lived high and mighty he knocked off their high horse. He used the city built on the hill as fill for the marshes. All the exploited and outcast peoples build their lives on the reclaimed land.

The path of right-living people is level. The Leveler evens the road for the right-living. We're in no hurry, God. We're content to linger in the path sign-posted with your decisions. Who you are and what you've done are all we'll ever want. Through the night my soul longs for you. Deep from within me my spirit reaches out to you.

When your decisions are on public display, everyone learns how to

live right. If the wicked are shown grace, they don't seem to get it. In the land of right living, they persist in wrong living, blind to the splendor of God. You hold your hand up high, God, but they don't see it. Open their eyes to what you do, to see your zealous love for your people. Shame them. Light a fire under them. Get the attention of these enemies of yours.

God, order a peaceful and whole life for us because everything we've done, you've done for us.

28. PEACE AND SIN DO NOT MIX

(Isaiah 59:8; 48:22, KJV)

The way of peace they [the wicked] know not; and there is no judgment in their goings: they have made them crooked paths: whosoever goeth therein shall not know peace. There is no peace, saith the Lord, unto the wicked.

29. PEACE SHOULD EXIST BETWEEN BELIEVERS

(2 Corinthians 13:11; 2 Timothy 2:22, GW)

With that, brothers and sisters, I must say goodbye. Make sure that you improve. Accept my encouragement. Share the same attitude and live in peace. The God of love and peace will be with you.

Stay away from lusts which tempt young people. Pursue what has God's approval. Pursue faith, love, and peace together with those who worship the Lord with a pure heart.

30. PEACE IS GOVERNED BY RULES

(1 Peter 3:8-13, MsgB)

Summing up: Be agreeable, be sympathetic, be loving, be compassionate, be humble. That goes for all of you, no exceptions. No retaliation. No sharp-tongued sarcasm. Instead, bless—that's your job, to bless. You'll be a blessing and also get a blessing.

Whoever wants to embrace life and see the day fill up with good, here's what you do: [#1] Say nothing evil or hurtful; [#2] Snub evil and cultivate good; [#3] run after peace for all you're worth. God looks on all this with approval, listening and responding well to what he's asked; but he turns his back on those who do evil things. If with heart and soul you're doing good, do you think you can be stopped?

I am searching for that which every person seeks–peace and rest.

Dante Alighieri

MAKING PEACE A PART OF ME

PERSONAL INVENTORY

1. Define Peace in your own words.

2. Assuming that Love is the most important of the nine Fruit of the Spirit, of the remaining eight traits, what ranking do you give Peace?

3. Rate how important Peace is to you.

❑ Not Important ❑ Average Importance ❑ Very Important

4. Honestly evaluate yourself in light of Peace and score yourself on this trait (check one).

❑ I do not have peace at all–I constantly struggle to have peace.
❑ I generally do not have peace–but sometimes I do.
❑ I have peace most of the time–I feel at peace often.
❑ I have peace all of the time–having peace is one of my strengths.

5. Based on the insights in this section and your own knowledge of Peace, how can you increase this trait in your life?

6. If you were to ask God to give you Peace, exactly what would you ask Him for?

7. Can you think of any positives if you more actively incorporate Peace in your life?

8. Can you think of any negatives if you don't incorporate Peace in your life?

9. Emotional Intelligence (EI) is understanding and managing your own emotions and being sensitive to and successfully responding to the emotions of other people. Briefly explain how Peace can help in this process.

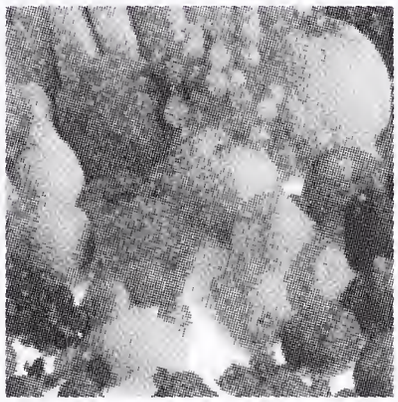
10. Share this Personal Inventory with significant persons in your life. Seek their honest opinion and feedback. How did they respond to these queries? Did they agree or disagree with your assessment? Did they have any suggestions or concerns?

Choose Patience

I choose patience. I will overlook the inconveniences of the world. Instead of cursing the one who takes my place, I'll invite him to do so. Rather than complaining that the wait is too long, I will thank God for a moment to pray. Instead of clinching my fist at new assignments, I will face them with joy and courage.

Max Lucado

Chapter 4



PATIENCE
Fourth Fruit of the Spirit

The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

Galatians 5:22, 23 (NIV)

DEFINITION:

Greek–makrothumia; patient endurance; the ability to endure waiting or delay without becoming annoyed or upset; to persevere calmly when faced with difficulties; able to tolerate trying circumstances, or being hurt, provoked, or bothered without complaint or loss of temper

SYNONYMS:

endurance, staying power, stamina, persistence, perseverance

INSIGHT:

Patience is an active endurance of opposition, not a passive resignation. It means enduring with steadfastness and long suffering forbearance even in the most trying of circumstances or with the most difficult people. Although the believer has to actively work to develop it, patience is ultimately a gift of God. Consistently displaying patience evidences maturity in the Christian life.

31. PATIENCE BRING BLESSINGS

(Hebrews 11:35-40, MsgB)

Women received their loved ones back from the dead. There were those who, under torture, refused to give in and go free, preferring something better: resurrection. Others braved abuse and whips, and, yes, chains and dungeons. We have stories of those who were stoned, sawed in two, murdered in cold blood; stories of vagrants wandering the earth in animal skins, homeless, friendless, powerless—the world didn't deserve them!—making their way as best they could on the cruel edges of the world.

Not one of these people, even though their lives of faith were exemplary, got their hands on what was promised. God had a better plan for us: that their faith and our faith would come together to make one completed whole, their lives of faith not complete apart from ours.

32. PATIENCE IS ENDURING THE PAIN

(Job 7:1-16, 13:15, CW)

Life is full of responsibilities and hard work. It's forced on man and he can't escape from it. Like a slave longing for the evening shadows or a laborer anticipating his wages at the end of the week, that's how I've longed for release during these months of misery and these nights of grief.

When I lie down at night I long for morning; I toss and turn all night until the sun comes up. My body is covered with scabs from my festering sores, and worms crawl all over me as if I were already dead. My days are like loose threads on a weaver's cloth; I wish they were cut off because they are no longer useful. My life has been as brief as a passing wind and my eyes will never see happiness again.

Soon you will see me no more. You'll look for me, and I'll be gone. Like a cloud that comes and goes, so is the life of one who dies. He goes down to the grave and comes up no more. He will never come back to his house again, neither will his place know him anymore.

I just can't be quiet. I'm speaking out in anguish of spirit and in bitterness of soul. Why are you keeping an eye on me like this? Am I some kind of monster or some strange sea creature? When I lie down to rest, I hope to get some relief from my pain and from your stares.

You come here trying to play God, frightening me with your supposed visions and dreams, and sitting there staring at me. I give up. I wish someone would strangle me so I could die rather than go on living in this rotting body. I despise my life. I'm tired of living. Why don't you just leave me alone? Nothing makes sense anymore....

Though He take my life, still I will trust Him. I am not afraid to state my case in His presence.

33. PATIENCE IS BELIEVING, WAITING, AND WATCHING

(John 14:1-4, 15-21, 25-31, MsgB)

[Jesus talking to His disciples] You trust God, don't you? Trust me. There is plenty of room for you in my Father's home. If that weren't so, would I have told you that I'm on my way to get a room ready for you? And if I'm on my way to get your room ready, I'll come back and get you so you can live where I live. And you already know the road I'm taking.

If you love me, show it by doing what I've told you. I will talk to the Father, and he'll provide you another Friend so that you will always have someone with you. This Friend is the Spirit of Truth. The godless world can't take him in because it doesn't have eyes to see him, doesn't know what to look for. But you know him already because he has been staying with you, and will even be in you!

I will not leave you orphaned. I'm coming back. In just a little while the world will no longer see me, but you're going to see me because I am alive and you're about to come alive. At that moment you will know absolutely that I'm in my Father, and you're in me, and I'm in you.

The person who knows my commandments and keeps them, that's who loves me. And the person who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and make myself plain to him.

I'm telling you these things while I'm still living with you. The Friend, the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send at my request, will

make everything plain to you. He will remind you of all the things I have told you. I'm leaving you well and whole. That's my parting gift to you. Peace. I don't leave you the way you're used to being left—feeling abandoned, bereft. So don't be upset. Don't be distraught.

You've heard me tell you, 'I'm going away, and I'm coming back.' If you loved me, you would be glad that I'm on my way to the Father because the Father is the goal and purpose of my life.

I've told you this ahead of time, before it happens, so that when it does happen, the confirmation will deepen your belief in me. I'll not be talking with you much more like this because the chief of this godless world is about to attack. But don't worry—he has nothing on me, no claim on me. But so the world might know how thoroughly I love the Father, I am carrying out my Father's instructions right down to the last detail. . . .

34. PATIENCE PLUS OBEDIENCE IS A SAVING COMBINATION

(Revelation 14:9-12, NKJV)

Then a third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice,"If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives his mark on his forehead or on his hand, he himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into the cup of His indignation. He shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. And the

smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever; and they have no rest day or night, who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name."

Here is the patience of the saints; here are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.

35. PATIENCE LEADS TO CHARACTER BUILDING

(James 1:2-8, 12-17, NKJV)

My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.

If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him. But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him. Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone. But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived,

it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death.

Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren. Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.

36. PATIENCE IS THE KEY TO ADVENT READINESS

(James 5:7-12, MsgB)

Meanwhile, friends, wait patiently for the Master's Arrival. You see farmers do this all the time, waiting for their valuable crops to mature, patiently letting the rain do its slow but sure work. Be patient like that. Stay steady and strong. The Master could arrive at any time.

Friends, don't complain about each other. A far greater complaint could be lodged against you, you know. The Judge is standing just around the corner.

Take the old prophets as your mentors. They put up with anything, went through everything, and never once quit, all the time honoring God. What a gift life is to those who stay the course! You've heard, of course, of Job's staying power, and you know how God brought it all together for him at the end. That's because God cares, cares right down to the last detail.

And since you know that he cares, let your language show it. Don't add words like "I swear to God" to your own words. Don't show your impatience by concocting oaths to hurry up God. Just say yes or no. Just say what is true. That way, your language can't be used against you.

37. PATIENCE IS NECESSARY DURING END-TIME

(2 Peter 3:3-16, NIV)

First of all, you must understand that in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and following their own evil desires. They will say, "Where is this 'coming' he promised? Ever since our fathers died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation." But they deliberately forget that long ago by God's word the heavens existed and the earth was formed out of water and by water. By these waters also the world of that time was deluged and destroyed. By the same word the present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.

But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare. Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. but in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new

earth, the home of righteousness.

So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him. Bear in mind that our Lord's patience means salvation, just as our dear brother Paul also wrote you with the wisdom that God gave him.

38. PATIENCE IS ACQUIRED THROUGH TIME AND TRIAL

(Nehemiah 9:29-31, GW)

You warned them in order to bring them back to your teachings, but they became arrogant and would not obey your commandments.

They sinned by not following your regulations. If anyone follows them, he will find life in them. But they gave you the cold shoulder, became impossible to deal with, and wouldn't listen. You were patient with them for many years. You warned them by your Spirit through your prophets.

However, they wouldn't listen. So you handed them over to the people in the surrounding nations. But your compassion is endless.

You didn't destroy them or abandon them.

You are a merciful and compassionate God.

39. PATIENCE REWARDS THOSE WHO WAIT

(Luke 2:25-33, MsgB)

In Jerusalem at the time, there was a man, Simeon by name, a good man, a man who lived in the prayerful expectancy of help for Israel. And the Holy Spirit was on him. The Holy Spirit had shown him that he would see the Messiah of God before he died. Led by the Spirit, he entered the Temple. As the parents of the child Jesus brought him in to carry out the rituals of the Law, Simeon took him into his arms and blessed God:

God, you can now release your servant; release me in peace as you promised.

With my own eyes I've seen your salvation; it's now out in the open for everyone to see:

A God-revealing light to the non-Jewish nations, and of glory for your people Israel.

Jesus' father and mother were speechless with surprise at these words.

40. PATIENCE RECEIVED REQUIRES PATIENCE TO BE EXTENDED

(Matthew 18:21 35, GW)

Then Peter came to Jesus and asked him, "Lord, how often do I have to forgive a believer who wrongs me? Seven times?"

Jesus answered him, "I tell you, not just seven times, but seventy times seven. That is why the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. When he began to do this, a servant who owed him millions of dollars was brought to him. Because he could not pay off the debt, the master ordered him, his wife, his children, and all that he had to be sold to pay off the account. Then the servant fell at his master's feet and said, 'Be patient with me, and I will repay everything!'

The master felt sorry for his servant, freed him, and canceled his debt. But when that servant went away, he found a servant who owed him hundreds of dollars. He grabbed the servant he found and began to choke him. 'Pay what you owe!' he said.

Then that other servant fell at his feet and begged him, 'Be patient with me, and I will repay you.' But he refused. Instead, he turned away and had that servant put into prison until he would repay what he owed. The other servants who worked with him saw what had happened and felt very sad. They told their master the whole story.

Then his master sent for him and said to him, 'You evil servant! I canceled your entire debt, because you begged me. Shouldn't you have treated the other servant as mercifully as I treated you?'

His master was so angry that he handed him over to the torturers until he would repay everything that he owed. That is what my Father in heaven will do to you if each of you does not sincerely forgive other believers."

Patience does not mean just grin and bear things, stoic-like, but accept them cheerfully as therapeutic workouts planned by a heavenly trainer who is resolved to get you up to full fitness.

J. L. Packer

MAKING PATIENCE A PART OF ME

PERSONAL INVENTORY

1. Define Patience in your own words.

2. Assuming that Love is the most important of the nine Fruit of the Spirit, of the remaining eight traits, what ranking do you give Patience?

3. Rate how important Patience is to you.

❑ Not Important ❑ Average Importance ❑ Very Important

4. Honestly evaluate yourself in light of Patience and score yourself on this trait (check one).

❑ I am not patient at all–I constantly struggle with patience.
❑ I generally am not patient–but sometimes I manage to be patient.
❑ I am patient most of the time–I feel comfortable with patience.
❑ I am patient all of the time–patience is one of my strengths.

5. Based on the insights in this section and your own knowledge of Patience, how can you increase this trait in your life?

6. If you were to ask God for more Patience, exactly what would you ask Him for?

7. Can you think of any positives if you more actively incorporate Patience in your life?

8. Can you think of any negatives if you don't incorporate Patience in your life?

9. Emotional Intelligence (EI) is understanding and managing your own emotions and being sensitive to and successfully responding to the emotions of other people. Briefly explain how Patience can help in this process.

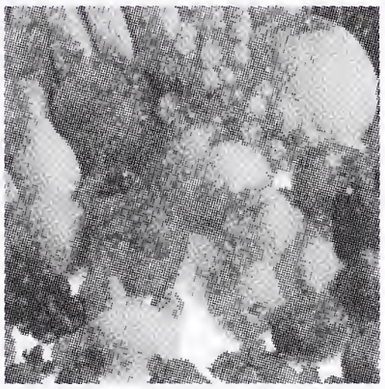
10. Share this Personal Inventory with significant persons in your life. Seek their honest opinion and feedback. How did they respond to these queries? Did they agree or disagree with your assessment? Did they have any suggestions or concerns?

Choose Kindness

I choose kindness. I will be kind to the poor, for they are alone. Kind to the rich, for they are afraid. And kind to the unkind, for such is how God has treated me.

Max Lucado

Chapter 5



KINDNESS
Fifth Fruit of the Spirit

The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

Galatians 5:22, 23 (NIV)

DEFINITION:

Greek–chrestotes; to be thoughtful and helpful to others; the practice of being or the capability to be sympathetic and compassionate; an act that shows consideration and caring; to be kindly inclined; to speak and relate in a gentle and compassionate manner

SYNONYMS:

compassion, gentleness, thoughtfulness, consideration, helpfulness

INSIGHT:

Kindness is best understood as helpfulness to others prompted by an experience with God's redemptive love; God treats the believer with an unmatched love and kindness–they pass this same love in acts to everyone with whom they interact. The kind Christian is one who combines a love of humanity with actions that demonstrate love tangibly. Kindness at work is seen in attitude and actions.

41. KINDNESS DISCERNS WHEN HELP IS NEEDED

(Joshua 2:6-16, NIV)

But she had taken them up to the roof and hidden them under the stalks of flax she had laid out on the roof. So the men set out in pursuit of the spies on the road that leads to the fords of the Jordan, and as soon as the pursuers had gone out, the gate was shut.

Before the spies lay down for the night, she went up on the roof and said to them, "I know that the LORD has given this land to you and that a great fear of you has fallen on us, so that all who live in this country are melting in fear because of you. We have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red Sea for you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to Sihon and Og, the two kings of the Amorites east of the Jordan, whom you completely destroyed.

When we heard of it, our hearts melted and everyone's courage failed because of you, for the LORD your God is God in heaven above and on the earth below. Now then, please swear to me by the LORD that you will show kindness to my family, because I have shown kindness to you. Give me a sure sign that you will spare the lives of my father and mother, my brothers and sisters, and all who belong to them, and that you will save us from death."

"Our lives for your lives!" the men assured her. "If you don't tell what we are doing, we will treat you kindly and faithfully when the LORD gives us the land."

So she let them down by a rope through the window, for the house she lived in was part of the city wall. Now she had said to them, "Go to

the hills so the pursuers will not find you. Hide yourselves there three days until they return, and then go on your way."

42. KINDNESS RADICALLY EXTENDS ITSELF FOR OTHERS

(2 Samuel 9:1-13, MsgB)

One day David asked, "Is there anyone left of Saul's family? If so, I'd like to show him some kindness in honor of Jonathan." It happened that a servant from Saul's household named Ziba was there. They called him into David's presence. The king asked him, "Are you Ziba?"

"Yes sir," he replied. The king asked, "Is there anyone left from the family of Saul to whom I can show some godly kindness?" Ziba told the king, "Yes, there is Jonathan's son, lame in both feet." "Where is he?" "He's living at the home of Makir son of Ammiel in Lo Debar."

King David didn't lose a minute. He sent and got him from the home of Makir son of Ammiel in Lo Debar. When Mephibosheth son of Jonathan (who was the son of Saul), came before David, he bowed deeply, abasing himself, honoring David. David spoke his name: "Mephibosheth." "Yes sir?"

"Don't be frightened," said David. "I'd like to do something special for you in memory of your father Jonathan. To begin with, I'm returning to you all the properties of your grandfather Saul. Furthermore, from now on you'll take all your meals at my table." Shuffling and stammering, not looking him in the eye, Mephibosheth said, "Who am

I that you pay attention to a stray dog like me?"

David then called in Ziba, Saul's right-hand man, and told him, "Everything that belonged to Saul and his family, I've handed over to your master's grandson. You and your sons and your servants will work his land and bring in the produce, provisions for your master's grandson. Mephibosheth himself, your master's grandson, from now on will take all his meals at my table." Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty servants.

"All that my master the king has ordered his servant," answered Ziba, "your servant will surely do." And Mephibosheth ate at David's table, just like one of the royal family. Mephibosheth also had a small son named Mica. All who were part of Ziba's household were now the servants of Mephibosheth. Mephibosheth lived in Jerusalem, taking all his meals at the king's table. He was lame in both feet.

43. KINDNESS IS PART OF THE BELIEVER'S ARMOR

(Colossians 3:1-14, NIV)

Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature:

sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. Because of these, the wrath of God is coming. You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived. But now you must rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips. Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator. Here there is no Greek or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all, and is in all.

Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

44. KINDNESS OF GOD SAVES

(Titus 3:1-8, NIV)

Remind the people to be subject to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready to do whatever is good, to slander no one, to be peaceable and considerate, and to show true humility toward all men.

At one time we too were foolish, disobedient, deceived and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures. We lived in malice and envy, being hated and hating one another. But when the kindness and

love of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life. This is a trustworthy saying. And I want you to stress these things, so that those who have trusted in God may be careful to devote themselves to doing what is good. These things are excellent and profitable for everyone.

45. KINDNESS IS PART OF SPIRITUAL MATURITY

(2 Peter 1:2-10, NIV)

Grace and peace be yours in abundance through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.

His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.

For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love.

For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will

keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But if anyone does not have them, he is near-sighted and blind, and has forgotten that he has been cleansed from his past sins.

Therefore, my brothers, be all the more eager to make your calling and election sure. For if you do these things, you will never fall.

46. KINDNESS IS A WAY TO BLESS OTHERS

(Ephesians 2:1-10, MsgB)

It wasn't so long ago that you were mired in that old stagnant life of sin. You let the world, which doesn't know the first thing about living, tell you how to live. You filled your lungs with polluted unbelief, and then exhaled disobedience. We all did it, all of us doing what we felt like doing, when we felt like doing it, all of us in the same boat.

It's a wonder God didn't lose his temper and do away with the whole lot of us. Instead, immense in mercy and with an incredible love, he embraced us. He took our sin-dead lives and made us alive in Christ. He did all this on his own, with no help from us! Then he picked us up and set us down in highest heaven in company with Jesus, our Messiah.

Now God has us where he wants us, with all the time in this world and the next to shower grace and kindness upon us in Christ Jesus. Saving is all his idea, and all his work. All we do is trust him enough to let him do it. It's God's gift from start to finish! We don't play the major

role. If we did, we'd probably go around bragging that we'd done the whole thing!

No, we neither make nor save ourselves. God does both the making and saving. He creates each of us by Christ Jesus to join him in the work he does, the good work he has gotten ready for us to do, work we had better be doing.

47. KINDNESS PURIFIES THE LIFE

(2 Corinthians 6:2-10, GW)

God says,
"At the right time I heard you.
On the day of salvation I helped you."
Listen, now is God's acceptable time! Now is the day of salvation!
We don't give people any opportunity to find fault with how we serve. Instead, our lives demonstrate that we are God's servants. We have endured many things: suffering, distress, anxiety, beatings, imprisonments, riots, hard work, sleepless nights, and lack of food.

People can see our purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, the Holy Spirit's presence in our lives, our sincere love, truthfulness, and the presence of God's power. We demonstrate that we are God's servants as we are praised and dishonored, as we are slandered and honored, and as we use what is right to attack what is wrong and to defend the truth.

We are treated as dishonest although we are honest, as unknown

although we are well-known, as dying although, as you see, we go on living. We are punished, but we are not killed. People think we are sad although we're always glad, that we're beggars although we make many people spiritually rich, that we have nothing although we possess everything.

48. KINDNESS IS NOT TO BE TAKEN ADVANTAGE OF

(Romans 11:20-24, NIV)

Granted. But they were broken off because of unbelief, and you stand by faith. Do not be arrogant, but be afraid. For if God did not spare the natural branches, he will not spare you either.

Consider therefore the kindness and sternness of God: sternness to those who fell, but kindness to you, provided that you continue in his kindness. Otherwise, you also will be cut off. And if they do not persist in unbelief, they will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again.

After all, if you were cut out of an olive tree that is wild by nature, and contrary to nature were grafted into a cultivated olive tree, how much more readily will these, the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree!

49. KINDNESS HAS AN ETERNAL PERSPECTIVE

(Isaiah 54:9-10, GW)

"To me this is like Noah's floodwaters, when I swore an oath that Noah's floodwaters would never cover the earth again. So now I swear an oath not to be angry with you or punish you.

The mountains may move, and the hills may shake, but my kindness will never depart from you. My promise of peace will never change," Says the Lord, who has compassion on you.

50. KINDNESS PERSISTS

(Nehemiah 9:15-20, NIV)

In their hunger you gave them bread from heaven and in their thirst you brought them water from the rock; you told them to go in and take possession of the land you had sworn with uplifted hand to give them.

Because of your great compassion you did not abandon them in the desert. By day the pillar of cloud did not cease to guide them on their path, nor the pillar of fire by night to shine on the way they were to take. You gave your good Spirit to instruct them. You did not withhold your manna from their mouths, and you gave them water for their thirst.

MAKING KINDNESS A PART OF ME

PERSONAL INVENTORY

1. Define Kindness in your own words.

2. Assuming that Love is the most important of the nine Fruit of the Spirit, of the remaining eight traits, what ranking do you give Kindness?

3. Rate how important Kindness is to you.

❑ Not Important ❑ Average Importance ❑ Very Important

4. Honestly evaluate yourself in light of Kindness and score yourself on this trait (check one).

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❑ I generally am not kind–but sometimes I manage to be kind.
❑ I am kind most of the time–I feel comfortable with being kind.
❑ I am kind all of the time–kindness is one of my strengths.

5. Based on the insights in this section and your own knowledge of Kindness, how can you increase this trait in your life?

6. If you were to ask God to increase your Kindness, exactly what would you ask Him for?

7. Can you think of any positives if you more actively incorporate Kindness in your life?

8. Can you think of any negatives if you don't incorporate Kindness in your life?

9. Emotional Intelligence (EI) is understanding and managing your own emotions and being sensitive to and successfully responding to the emotions of other people. Briefly explain how Kindness can help in this process.

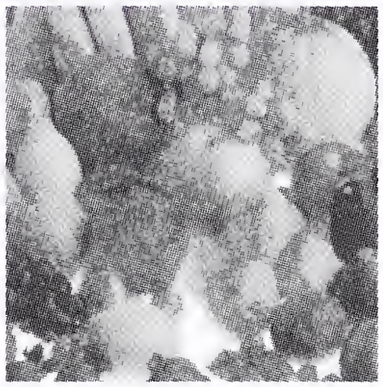
10. Share this Personal Inventory with significant persons in your life. Seek their honest opinion and feedback. How did they respond to these queries? Did they agree or disagree with your assessment? Did they have any suggestions or concerns?

Choose Goodness

I choose goodness. I will go without a dollar before I take a dishonest one. I will be overlooked before I will boast. I will confess before I will accuse. I choose goodness.

Max Lucado

Chapter 6



GOODNESS
Sixth Fruit of the Spirit

The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

Galatians 5:22, 23 (NIV)

DEFINITION:

Greek–agathosune; the quality and state of being good; personal virtue, kindly benevolent, generous, gushingly giving and sharing with others.

SYNONYMS:

virtuousness, decency, kindness, honesty, integrity, righteousness, benevolence

INSIGHT:

In contrast to the Greek view of "the good" as an ideal, the biblical concept focuses on concrete experiences of what God has done and is doing in the lives of God's people. Scripture affirms that God is and does good. Though God alone is truly good, Scripture repeatedly speaks of good persons who seek to live in accordance with God's will. Christians are saved in order to do good. The goodness of God to the believer spills over into wonderful goodness to others.

51. GOODNESS IS SHOWN IN ACTIONS

(Acts 11:22-26, NIV)

News of this reached the ears of the church at Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas to Antioch. When he arrived and saw the evidence of the grace of God, he was glad and encouraged them all to remain true to the Lord with all their hearts. He was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and faith, and a great number of people were brought to the Lord.

Then Barnabas went to Tarsus to look for Saul, and when he found him, he brought him to Antioch. So for a whole year Barnabas and Saul met with the church and taught great numbers of people. The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch.

52. GOODNESS OF GOD CAUSES REPENTANCE

(Romans 2:1-10, MsgB and KJV)

Those people are on a dark spiral downward. But if you think that leaves you on the high ground where you can point your finger at others, think again. Every time you criticize someone, you condemn yourself. It takes one to know one. Judgmental criticism of others is a well-known way of escaping detection in your own crimes and misdemeanors. But God isn't so easily diverted. He sees right through all such smoke screens and holds you to what you've done.

You didn't think, did you, that just by pointing your finger at others

you would distract God from seeing all your misdoings and from coming down on you hard? Or did you think that because he's such a nice God, he'd let you off the hook? Better think this one through from the beginning. God is kind, but he's not soft. In kindness he takes us firmly by the hand and leads us into a radical life-change.

You're not getting by with anything. Every refusal and avoidance of God adds fuel to the fire. The day is coming when it's going to blaze hot and high, God's fiery and righteous judgment. Make no mistake: In the end you get what's coming to you—Real Life for those who work on God's side, but to those who insist on getting their own way and take the path of least resistance, Fire!

If you go against the grain, you get splinters, regardless of which neighborhood you're from, what your parents taught you, what schools you attended. But if you embrace the way God does things, there are wonderful payoffs, again without regard to where you are from or how you were brought up. (MsgB)

Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things. But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things.

And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?

But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; Who will render to every man according to his deeds: To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life: But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile;

But glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile. (KJV)

53. GOODNESS DEMANDS COMMITMENT

(Luke 18:18-30, MsgB)

One day one of the local officials asked him, "Good Teacher, what must I do to deserve eternal life?"

Jesus said, "Why are you calling me good? No one is good—only God. You know the commandments, don't you? No illicit sex, no killing, no stealing, no lying, honor your father and mother."

He said, "I've kept them all for as long as I can remember."

When Jesus heard that, he said, "Then there's only one thing left to do: Sell everything you own and give it away to the poor. You will have riches in heaven. Then come, follow me."

This was the last thing the official expected to hear. He was very rich and became terribly sad. He was holding on tight to a lot of things and not about to let them go.

Seeing his reaction, Jesus said, "Do you have any idea how difficult it is for people who have it all to enter God's kingdom? I'd say it's easier to thread a camel through a needle's eye than get a rich person into God's kingdom."

"Then who has any chance at all?" the others asked.

"No chance at all," Jesus said, "if you think you can pull it off by yourself. Every chance in the world if you trust God to do it."

Peter tried to regain some initiative: "We left everything we owned and followed you, didn't we?"

"Yes," said Jesus, "and you won't regret it. No one who has sacrificed home, spouse, brothers and sisters, parents, children—whatever— will lose out. It will all come back multiplied many times over in your lifetime. And then the bonus of eternal life!"

54. GOODNESS IS LOVING

(Ephesians 5:1-10, MsgB)

Watch what God does, and then you do it, like children who learn proper behavior from their parents. Mostly what God does is love you. Keep company with him and learn a life of love. Observe how Christ loved us. His love was not cautious but extravagant. He didn't love in order to get something from us but to give everything of himself to us. Love like that.

Don't allow love to turn into lust, setting off a downhill slide into sexual promiscuity, filthy practices, or bullying greed. Though some

tongues just love the taste of gossip, Christians have better uses for language than that. Don't talk dirty or silly. That kind of talk doesn't fit our style. Thanksgiving is our dialect.

You can be sure that using people or religion or things just for what you can get out of them—the usual variations on idolatry—will get you nowhere, and certainly nowhere near the kingdom of Christ, the kingdom of God.

Don't let yourselves get taken in by religious smooth talk. God gets furious with people who are full of religious sales talk but want nothing to do with him. Don't even hang around people like that.
You groped your way through that murk once, but no longer. You're out in the open now. The bright light of Christ makes your way plain. So no more stumbling around. Get on with it! The good, the right, the true—these are the actions appropriate for daylight hours. Figure out what will please Christ, and then do it.

55. GOODNESS HAS PRINCIPLES

(Genesis 39:1-10, MsgB)

After Joseph had been taken to Egypt by the Ishmaelites, Potiphar an Egyptian, one of Pharaoh's officials and the manager of his household, bought him from them.

As it turned out, God was with Joseph and things went very well with him. He ended up living in the home of his Egyptian master. His master recognized that God was with him, saw that God was working

for good in everything he did. He became very fond of Joseph and made him his personal aide. He put him in charge of all his personal affairs, turning everything over to him.

From that moment on, God blessed the home of the Egyptian—all because of Joseph. The blessing of God spread over everything he owned, at home and in the fields, and all Potiphar had to concern himself with was eating three meals a day.

Joseph was a strikingly handsome man. As time went on, his master's wife became infatuated with Joseph and one day said, "Sleep with me."

He wouldn't do it. He said to his master's wife, "Look, with me here, my master doesn't give a second thought to anything that goes on here—he's put me in charge of everything he owns. He treats me as an equal. The only thing he hasn't turned over to me is you. You're his wife, after all! How could I violate his trust and sin against God?"

She pestered him day after day after day, but he stood his ground. He refused to go to bed with her.

56. GOODNESS FLOWS FROM GOD'S HAND

(Psalm 23, NIV)

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not be in want.
He makes me lie down in green pastures,
he leads me beside quiet waters,
he restores my soul.

He guides me in paths of righteousness
for his name's sake.
Even though I walk
through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil,
for you are with me;
your rod and your staff,
they comfort me.

You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies.
You anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.
Surely goodness and love will follow me
all the days of my life,
and I will dwell in the house of the Lord
forever.

57. GOODNESS IS SHOWN IN PROVIDENCE

(Romans 8:22-30, KJV)

For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.

For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

58. GOODNESS MEANS LIVING RIGHT

(Ephesians 5:5-11, KJV)

For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. Be not ye therefore partakers with them.

For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord:

walk as children of light: (For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;) Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord.

And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.

59. GOODNESS IS ARTICULATED IN THE COMMANDMENTS

(Exodus 20: 1-17, MsgB)

God spoke all these words:
I am God, your God,
who brought you out of the land of Egypt,
out of a life of slavery.
No other gods, only me.

No carved gods of any size, shape, or form of anything whatever, whether of things that fly or walk or swim. Don't bow down to them and don't serve them because I am God, your God, and I'm a most jealous God, punishing the children for any sins their parents pass on to them to the third, and yes, even to the fourth generation of those who hate me. But I'm unswervingly loyal to the thousands who love me and keep my commandments.

No using the name of God, your God, in curses or silly banter; God won't put up with the irreverant use of his name.

Observe the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Work six days and do

everything you need to do. But the seventh day is a Sabbath to God, your God. Don't do any work—not you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your servant, nor your maid, nor your animals, not even the foreign guest visiting in your town. For in six days God made Heaven, Earth, and sea, and everything in them; he rested on the seventh day. Therefore God blessed the Sabbath day; he set it apart as a holy day.

Honor your father and mother so that you'll live a long time in the land that God, your God, is giving you.

No murder.

No adultery.

No stealing.

No lies about your neighbor.

No lusting after your neighbor's house—or wife or servant or maid or ox or donkey. Don't set your heart on anything that is your neighbor's.

60. GOODNESS IS PART OF SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

(2 Peter 1:1-10, KJV)

Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ: Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord,

According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that

hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge;

And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity.

For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.

Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall.

MAKING GOODNESS A PART OF ME

PERSONAL INVENTORY

1. Define Goodness in your own words.

2. Assuming that Love is the most important of the nine Fruit of the Spirit, of the remaining eight traits, what ranking do you give Goodness?

3. Rate how important Goodness is to you.

❑ Not Important ❑ Average Importance ❑ Very Important

4. Honestly evaluate yourself in light of Goodness and score yourself on this trait (check one).

❑ I do not exhibit goodness at all–I struggle with showing goodness.

❑ I generally do not exhibit goodness–sometimes I manage to show it.

❑ I exhibit goodness most of the time–I feel comfortable with it.

❑ I exhibit goodness all of the time–it is one of my strengths.

5. Based on the insights in this section and your own knowledge of Goodness, how can you increase this trait in your life?

6. If you were to ask God to increase your Goodness, exactly what would you ask Him for?

7. Can you think of any positives if you more actively incorporate Goodness in your life?

8. Can you think of any negatives if you don't incorporate Goodness in your life?

9. Emotional Intelligence (EI) is understanding and managing your own emotions and being sensitive to and successfully responding to the emotions of other people. Briefly explain how Goodness can help in this process.

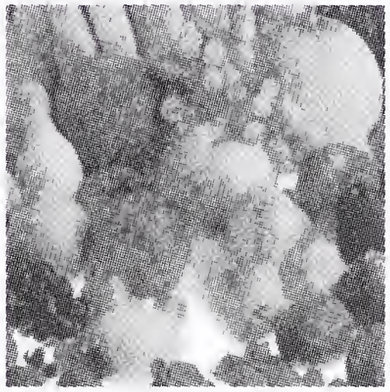
10. Share this Personal Inventory with significant persons in your life. Seek their honest opinion and feedback. How did they respond to these queries? Did they agree or disagree with your assessment? Did they have any suggestions or concerns?

Choose Faithfulness

I choose faithfulness. Today I will keep my promises. My debtors will not regret their trust. My associates will not question my word. My wife will not question my love. And my children will never fear that their father will not come home.

Max Lucado

Chapter 7



FAITHFULNESS
Seventh Fruit of the Spirit

The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

Galatians 5:22, 23 (NIV)

DEFINITION:

Greek–pistis; the divinely implanted, acquired and created principle of wholehearted confidence and trust in God and all He says; an unwavering belief; consistently trustworthy and loyal; resulting from a sense of responsibility or devotion to divine duty

SYNONYMS:

loyal, dedicated, committed, constant, conscientious

INSIGHT:

Faithfulness describes a Christian who has learned to implicitly believe in God. The Bible is believed to be totally reliable and dependable as a rule of faith and life. The faithful person is steadfast, unchanging, committed to God and to the right. Because of God's faithfulness, believers can rest in His promises and providence and have faith in Him–now and forever.

61. FAITHFULNESS BELIEVES GOD'S WORD

(Genesis 12:1-8, NIV)

The Lord had said to Abram, "Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you.

I will make you into a great nation
and I will bless you;
I will make your name great,
and you will be a blessing.
I will bless those who bless you,
and whoever curses you I will curse;
and all peoples on earth
will be blessed through you."

So Abram left, as the Lord had told him; and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he set out from Haran. He took his wife Sarai, his nephew Lot, all the possessions they had accumulated and the people they had acquired in Haran, and they set out for the land of Canaan, and they arrived there.

Abram traveled through the land as far as the site of the great tree of Moreh at Shechem. At that time the Canaanites were in the land. The Lord appeared to Abram and said, "To your offspring I will give this land." So he built an altar there to the Lord, who had appeared to him.

From there he went on toward the hills east of Bethel and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east. There he built an altar to the Lord and called on the name of the Lord.

62. FAITHFULNESS TREATS OTHERS WELL

(Psalm 15:1-5, MsgB)

God, who gets invited to dinner at your place? How do we get on your guest list? Walk straight, act right, tell the truth. Don't hurt your friend, don't blame your neighbor; despise the despicable. Keep your word even when it costs you, make an honest living, never take a bribe. You'll never get blacklisted if you live like this.

63. FAITHFULNESS BRINGS REWARDS

(Joshua 14:6-14, NKJV)

Then the children of Judah came to Joshua in Gilgal. And Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite said to him: "You know the word which the LORD said to Moses the man of God concerning you and me in Kadesh Barnea.

I was forty years old when Moses the servant of the LORD sent me from Kadesh Barnea to spy out the land, and I brought back word to him as it was in my heart. Nevertheless my brethren who went up with me made the heart of the people melt, but I wholly followed the LORD my God.

So Moses swore on that day, saying, 'Surely the land where your foot has trodden shall be your inheritance and your children's forever, because you have wholly followed the LORD my God.'

And now, behold, the LORD has kept me alive, as He said, these

forty five years, ever since the LORD spoke this word to Moses while Israel wandered in the wilderness; and now, here I am this day, eighty-five years old. As yet I am as strong this day as on the day that Moses sent me; just as my strength was then, so now is my strength for war, both for going out and for coming in.

Now therefore, give me this mountain of which the LORD spoke in that day; for you heard in that day how the Anakim were there, and that the cities were great and fortified. It may be that the LORD will be with me, and I shall be able to drive them out as the LORD said."

And Joshua blessed him, and gave Hebron to Caleb the son of Jephunneh as an inheritance. Hebron therefore became the inheritance of Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite to this day, because he wholly followed the LORD God of Israel.

64. FAITHFULNESS IS SHOWN IN GOD'S PROMISES

(1 Kings 8:54-61, CW)

When Solomon finished his prayer, he rose from where he had been kneeling in front of God's altar praying with outstretched arms and looked toward the people. In a loud voice he blessed them, saying,

"Praise the Lord! He has given His people peace just as He said He would. He has kept all the promises He gave us through His servant Moses. May the Lord our God ever be with you as He was with our forefathers. May He never leave us or forsake us.

May He give us the desire to follow Him and help us to walk in His

ways and keep His commandments and laws which He gave us through our forefathers.

May the Lord God of Israel never forget the prayer I just prayed. May He keep it before Him day and night and may He help us according to our daily need. Then people everywhere will know that the Lord is God and that there is no other.

May your hearts always be in tune with His. May you always love the Lord your God with all your hearts. May you always be as committed to obeying Him and keeping His commandments as you are today."

65. FAITHFULNESS MAY CAUSE SUFFERING

(1 Peter 4:12-19, NIV)

Dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed.

If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you.

If you suffer, it should not be as a murderer or thief or any other kind of criminal, or even as a meddler.

However, if you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear that name. For it is time for judgment to begin with the family of God; and if it begins with us, what will the outcome be for those who do not obey the gospel of God? And, if it is hard for the

righteous to be saved, what will become of the ungodly and the sinner?

So then, those who suffer according to God's will should commit themselves to their faithful Creator and continue to do good.

66. FAITHFULNESS JUDGES THE WORLD

(Revelation 19:11-16, GW)

I saw heaven standing open. There was a white horse, and its rider is named Faithful and True. With integrity he judges and wages war.

His eyes are flames of fire. On his head are many crowns. He has a name written on him, but only he knows what it is. He wears clothes dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God.

The armies of heaven, wearing pure, white linen, follow him on white horses. A sharp sword comes out of his mouth to defeat the nations. He will rule them with an iron scepter and tread the wine-press of the fierce anger of God Almighty.

On his clothes and his thigh he has a name written: King of kings and Lord of lords.

67. FAITHFULNESS KEEPS THE BELIEVER

(Lamentations 3:22-25, KJV)

It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness.

The Lord is my portion, saith my soul; therefore will I hope in him.

The Lord is good unto them that wait for him, to the soul that seeketh him.

68. FAITHFULNESS PRODUCES PRAISE

(Psalm 92:1-8, NIV)

It is good to praise the Lord
and make music to your name, O Most High,
to proclaim your love in the morning
and your faithfulness at night,
to the music of the ten-stringed lyre
and the melody of the harp.

For you make me glad by your deeds, O Lord;
I sing for joy at the works of your hands.
How great are your works, O Lord,
how profound your thoughts!
The senseless man does not know,
fools do not understand,
that though the wicked spring up like grass
and all evildoers flourish,
they will be forever destroyed.

But you, O Lord, are exalted forever.

69. FAITHFULNESS OVERCOMES TEMPTATION

(1 Corinthians 10:12-14, MsgB)

Don't be so naive and self-confident. You're not exempt. You could fall flat on your face as easily as anyone else. Forget about self-confidence; it's useless. Cultivate God-confidence.

No test or temptation that comes your way is beyond the course of what others have had to face. All you need to remember is that God will never let you down; he'll never let you be pushed past your limit; he'll always be there to help you come through it.

So, my very dear friends, when you see people reducing God to something they can use or control, get out of their company as fast as you can.

70. FAITHFULNESS ENDURES TO THE END

(Luke 16:1-10; Revelation 2:1-10, KJV)

And he said also unto his disciples, "There was a certain rich man, which had a steward; and the same was accused unto him that he had wasted his goods. And he called him, and said unto him, 'How is it that I hear this of thee? give an account of thy stewardship; for thou mayest be no longer steward.'

Then the steward said within himself, 'What shall I do? for my lord taketh away from me the stewardship: I cannot dig; to beg I am ashamed. I am resolved what to do, that, when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses.'

So he called every one of his lord's debtors unto him, and said unto the first, 'How much owest thou unto my lord?' And he said, 'An hundred measures of oil.' And he said unto him, 'Take thy bill, and sit down quickly, and write fifty.' Then said he to another, 'And how much owest thou?' And he said, 'An hundred measures of wheat.' And he said unto him, 'Take thy bill, and write fourscore.'

And the lord commended the unjust steward, because he had done wisely: for the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light. And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations.

He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much." (KJV)

Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write; These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks; I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars: And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted.

Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent. But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which

I also hate. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.

And unto the angel of the church in Smyrna write; These things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive; I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan. Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.

MAKING FAITHFULNESS A PART OF ME

PERSONAL INVENTORY

1. Define Faithfulness in your own words.

2. Assuming that Love is the most important of the nine Fruit of the Spirit, of the remaining eight traits, what ranking do you give Faithfulness?

3. Rate how important Faithfulness is to you.

❑ Not Important ❑ Average Importance ❑ Very Important

4. Honestly evaluate yourself in light of Faithfulness and score yourself on this trait (check one).

❑ I am not faithful at all–I constantly struggle with faithfulness.
❑ I generally am not faithful–but sometimes I manage to be faithful.
❑ I am faithful most of the time–I feel comfortable with faithfulness.
❑ I am faithful all of the time–faithfulness is one of my strengths.

5. Based on the insights in this section and your own knowledge of Faithfulness, how can you increase this trait in your life?

6. If you were to ask God for more Faithfulness, exactly what would you ask Him for?

7. Can you think of any positives if you more actively incorporate Faithfulness in your life?

8. Can you think of any negatives if you don't incorporate Faithfulness in your life?

9. Emotional Intelligence (EI) is understanding and managing your own emotions and being ensitive to and successfully responding to the emotions of other people. Briefly explain how Faithfulness can help in this process.

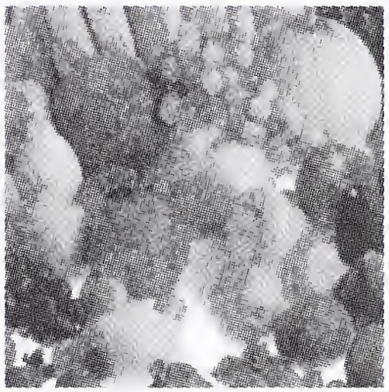
10. Share this Personal Inventory with significant persons in your life. Seek their honest opinion and feedback. How did they respond to these queries? Did they agree or disagree with your assessment? Did they have any suggestions or concerns?

Choose Gentleness

I choose gentleness. Nothing is won by force. I choose to be gentle. If I raise my voice may it be only in praise. If I clench my fist, may it be only in prayer. If I make a demand, may it be only of myself.

Max Lucado

Chapter 8



GENTLENESS
Eighth Fruit of the Spirit

The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

Galatians 5:22, 23 (NIV)

DEFINITION:

Greek–praotes; the disposition and tendency to be kindly consistent in character, action and empathy; having a mild yet firm nature or manner; showing quietness of nature; being moderate in force or degree so that the effects are not severe; empathetic firmness; cultured and refined character

SYNONYMS:

humbleness, quietness, moderation, modesty, mildness, kindness

INSIGHT:

Gentleness refers to power controlled by love and empathy, not to weakness or passivity. Christians are to be lovingly gentle in word and deed. Gentleness should characterize their relations to family, believers and non-believers. Gentleness is a moderating force that results in a beautiful and powerful humility.

71. GENTLENESS IS GODLY

(2 Samuel 22:30-40, KJV)

For by thee I have run through a troop: by my God have I leaped over a wall.

As for God, his way is perfect; the word of the Lord is tried: he is a buckler to all them that trust in him. For who is God, save the Lord? and who is a rock, save our God? God is my strength and power: and he maketh my way perfect. He maketh my feet like hinds' feet: and setteth me upon my high places. He teacheth my hands to war; so that a bow of steel is broken by mine arms.

Thou hast also given me the shield of thy salvation: and thy gentleness hath made me great. Thou hast enlarged my steps under me; so that my feet did not slip. I have pursued mine enemies, and destroyed them; and turned not again until I had consumed them. And I have consumed them, and wounded them, that they could not arise: yea, they are fallen under my feet.

For thou hast girded me with strength to battle: them that rose up against me hast thou subdued under me.

72. GENTLENESS IS RESPECTFUL

(1 Samuel 3:1-10, MsgB)

The boy Samuel was serving God under Eli's direction. This was at a time when the revelation of God was rarely heard or seen. One night

Eli was sound asleep (his eyesight was very bad—he could hardly see). It was well before dawn; the sanctuary lamp was still burning. Samuel was still in bed in the Temple of God, where the Chest of God rested.

Then God called out, "Samuel, Samuel!"

Samuel answered, "Yes? I'm here." Then he ran to Eli saying, "I heard you call. Here I am."

Eli said, "I didn't call you. Go back to bed." And so he did.

God called again, "Samuel, Samuel!"

Samuel got up and went to Eli, "I heard you call. Here I am."

Again Eli said, "Son, I didn't call you. Go back to bed." (This all happened before Samuel knew God for himself. It was before the revelation of God had been given to him personally.)

God called again, "Samuel!"—the third time! Yet again Samuel got up and went to Eli, "Yes? I heard you call me. Here I am."

That's when it dawned on Eli that God was calling the boy. So Eli directed Samuel, "Go back and lie down. If the voice calls again, say, 'Speak, God. I'm your servant, ready to listen.'" Samuel returned to his bed.

Then God came and stood before him exactly as before, calling out, "Samuel! Samuel!"

Samuel answered, "Speak. I'm your servant, ready to listen."

73. GENTLENESS STANDS STRONG

(2 Corinthians 10:1-8, MsgB)

And now a personal but most urgent matter; I write in the gentle but firm spirit of Christ. I hear that I'm being painted as cringing and wishy washy when I'm with you, but harsh and demanding when at a safe distance writing letters. Please don't force me to take a hard line when I'm present with you. Don't think that I'll hesitate a single minute to stand up to those who say I'm an unprincipled opportunist. Then they'll have to eat their words.

The world is unprincipled. It's dog-eat-dog out there! The world doesn't fight fair. But we don't live or fight our battles that way—never have and never will. The tools of our trade aren't for marketing or manipulation, but they are for demolishing that entire massively corrupt culture.

We use our powerful God-tools for smashing warped philosophies, tearing down barriers erected against the truth of God, fitting every loose thought and emotion and impulse into the structure of life shaped by Christ. Our tools are ready at hand for clearing the ground of every obstruction and building lives of obedience into maturity.

You stare and stare at the obvious, but you can't see the forest for the trees. If you're looking for a clear example of someone on Christ's side, why do you so quickly cut me out? Believe me, I am quite sure of my standing with Christ. You may think I overstate the authority he gave me, but I'm not backing off. Every bit of my commitment is for the purpose of building you up, after all, not tearing you down.

74. GENTLENESS HEALS

(Mark 5:25-34, NIV)

And a woman was there who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years. She had suffered a great deal under the care of many doctors and had spent all she had, yet instead of getting better she grew worse. When she heard about Jesus, she came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak, because she thought, "If I just touch his clothes, I will be healed." Immediately her bleeding stopped and she felt in her body that she was freed from her suffering.

At once Jesus realized that power had gone out from him. He turned around in the crowd and asked, "Who touched my clothes?"

"You see the people crowding against you," his disciples answered, "and yet you can ask, 'Who touched me?' "

But Jesus kept looking around to see who had done it. Then the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came and fell at his feet and, trembling with fear, told him the whole truth. He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace and be freed from your suffering."

75. GENTLENESS GIVES REST

(Matthew 11:27-30, MsgB)

Jesus resumed talking to the people, but now tenderly. "The Father has given me all these things to do and say. This is a unique Father-Son

operation, coming out of Father and Son intimacies and knowledge. No one knows the Son the way the Father does, nor the Father the way the Son does. But I'm not keeping it to myself; I'm ready to go over it line by line with anyone willing to listen.

Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly."

76. GENTLENESS WITH SINNERS

(Galatians 6:1-10, GW)

Brothers and sisters, if a person gets trapped by wrongdoing, those of you who are spiritual should help that person turn away from doing wrong. Do it in a gentle way. At the same time watch yourself so that you also are not tempted.

Help carry each other's burdens. In this way you will follow Christ's teachings. So if any one of you thinks you're important when you're really not, you're only fooling yourself. Each of you must examine your own actions. Then you can be proud of your own accomplishments without comparing yourself to others. Assume your own responsibility.

The person who is taught God's word should share all good things with his teacher. Make no mistake about this: You can never make a fool out of God. Whatever you plant is what you'll harvest. If you plant

in the soil of your corrupt nature, you will harvest destruction. But if you plant in the soil of your spiritual nature, you will harvest everlasting life.

We can't allow ourselves to get tired of living the right way. Certainly, each of us will receive everlasting life at the proper time, if we don't give up. Whenever we have the opportunity, we have to do what is good for everyone, especially for the family of believers.

77. GENTLENESS IS COURTEOUS

(Titus 3:1-8, GW)

Remind believers to willingly place themselves under the authority of government officials. Believers should obey them and be ready to help them with every good thing they do. Believers shouldn't curse anyone or be quarrelsome, but they should be gentle and show courtesy to everyone.

Indeed, we, too, were once stupid, disobedient, and misled. We were slaves to many kinds of lusts and pleasures. We were mean and jealous. We were hated, and we hated each other.

However, when God our Savior made his kindness and love for humanity appear, he saved us, but not because of anything we had done to gain his approval. Instead, because of his mercy he saved us through the washing in which the Holy Spirit gives us new birth and renewal. God poured a generous amount of the Spirit on us through Jesus Christ our Savior.

As a result, God in his kindness has given us his approval and we

have become heirs who have the confidence that we have everlasting life. This is a statement that can be trusted. I want you to insist on these things so that those who believe in God can concentrate on setting an example by doing good things. This is good and helps other people.

78. GENTLENESS PROMOTES UNITY

(Ephesians 4:1-5, MsgB)

In light of all this, here's what I want you to do. While I'm locked up here, a prisoner for the Master, I want you to get out there and walk—better yet, run!—on the road God called you to travel. I don't want any of you sitting around on your hands. I don't want anyone strolling off, down some path that goes nowhere.

And mark that you do this with humility and discipline—not in fits and starts, but steadily, pouring yourselves out for each other in acts of love, alert at noticing differences and quick at mending fences.

You were all called to travel on the same road and in the same direction, so stay together, both outwardly and inwardly. You have one Master, one faith, one baptism,

79. GENTLENESS REQUIRES DISCIPLINE

(Colossians 3:1-17, MsgB)

So if you're serious about living this new resurrection life with Christ, act like it. Pursue the things over which Christ presides. Don't shuffle along, eyes to the ground, absorbed with the things right in front of you. Look up, and be alert to what is going on around Christ—that's where the action is. See things from his perspective.

Your old life is dead. Your new life, which is your real life—even though invisible to spectators—is with Christ in God. He is your life. When Christ (your real life, remember) shows up again on this earth, you'll show up, too—the real you, the glorious you. Meanwhile, be content with obscurity, like Christ.

And that means killing off everything connected with that way of death: sexual promiscuity, impurity, lust, doing whatever you feel like whenever you feel like it, and grabbing whatever attracts your fancy. That's a life shaped by things and feelings instead of by God. It's because of this kind of thing that God is about to explode in anger. It wasn't long ago that you were doing all that stuff and not knowing any better. But you know better now, so make sure it's all gone for good: bad temper, irritability, meanness, profanity, dirty talk.

Don't lie to one another. You're done with that old life. It's like a filthy set of ill-fitting clothes you've stripped off and put in the fire. Now you're dressed in a new wardrobe. Every item of your new way of life is custom made by the Creator, with his label on it. All the old fash-

ions are now obsolete. Words like Jewish and non-Jewish, religious and irreligious, insider and outsider, uncivilized and uncouth, slave and free, mean nothing. From now on everyone is defined by Christ, everyone is included in Christ.

So, chosen by God for this new life of love, dress in the wardrobe God picked out for you: compassion, kindness, humility, quiet strength, discipline. Be even-tempered, content with second place, quick to forgive an offense. Forgive as quickly and completely as the Master forgave you. And regardless of what else you put on, wear love. It's your basic, all-purpose garment. Never be without it.

Let the peace of Christ keep you in tune with each other, in step with each other. None of this going off and doing your own thing. And cultivate thankfulness. Let the Word of Christ—the Message—have the run of the house. Give it plenty of room in your lives. Instruct and direct one another using good common sense. And sing, sing your hearts out to God! Let every detail in your lives—words, actions, whatever—be done in the name of the Master, Jesus, thanking God the Father every step of the way.

80. GENTLENESS SHOWS ITSELF IN SERVICE

(Acts 9:36-41, GW)

A disciple named Tabitha lived in the city of Joppa. Her Greek name was Dorcas. She always helped people and gave things to the poor. She became sick and died. Her body was prepared for burial and was laid in an upstairs room.

Lydda is near the city of Joppa. When the disciples heard that Peter was in Lydda, they sent two men to him. They begged Peter, "Hurry to Joppa! We need your help!"

So Peter went with them. When he arrived, he was taken upstairs. All the widows stood around him. They were crying and showing Peter the articles of clothing that Dorcas had made while she was still with them.

Peter made everyone leave the room.

He knelt and prayed. Then he turned toward the body and said, "Tabitha, get up!"

Tabitha opened her eyes, saw Peter, and sat up. Peter took her hand and helped her stand up. After he called the believers, especially the widows, he presented Tabitha to them. She was alive.

In every person who comes near, you look for what is good and strong; honor that; rejoice in it. As you can, try to imitate it, and your faults will drop off, like dead leaves, when their time comes.

John Ruskin

MAKING GENTLENESS A PART OF ME

PERSONAL INVENTORY

1. Define Gentleness in your own words.

2. Assuming that Love is the most important of the nine Fruit of the Spirit, of the remaining eight traits, what ranking do you give Gentleness?

3. Rate how important Gentleness is to you.

❑ Not Important ❑ Average Importance ❑ Very Important

4. Honestly evaluate yourself in light of Gentleness and score yourself on this trait (check one).

❑ I am not gentle at all–I constantly struggle with gentleness.
❑ I generally am not gentle–but sometimes I manage to be gentle.
❑ I am gentle most of the time–I feel comfortable with being gentle.
❑ I am gentle all of the time–being gentle is one of my strengths.

5. Based on the insights in this section and your own knowledge of Gentleness, how can you increase this trait in your life?

6. If you were to ask God for more Gentleness, exactly what would you ask Him for?

7. Can you think of any positives if you more actively incorporate Gentleness in your life?

8. Can you think of any negatives if you don't incorporate Gentleness in your life?

9. Emotional Intelligence (EI) is understanding and managing your own emotions and being sensitive to and successfully responding to the emotions of other people. Briefly explain how Gentleness can help in this process.

10. Share this Personal Inventory with significant persons in your life. Seek their honest opinion and feedback. How did they respond to these queries? Did they agree or disagree with your assessment? Did they have any suggestions or concerns?

There can be no growth or fruitfulness in the life that is centered in self. If you have accepted Christ as a personal Saviour, you are to forget yourself, and try to help others. Talk of the love of Christ, tell of His goodness. Do every duty that presents itself. Carry the burden of souls upon your heart, and by every means in your power seek to save the lost. As you receive the Spirit of Christ– the Spirit of unselfish love and labor for others– you will grow and bring forth fruit. The graces of the Spirit will ripen in your character. Your faith will increase, your convictions deepen, your love be made perfect. More and more you will reflect the likeness of Christ in all that is pure, noble, and lovely.

"The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance."
Gal. 5:22,23.

This fruit can never perish, but will produce after its kind a harvest unto eternal life. "When the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come." Christ is waiting with longing desire for the manifestation of Himself in His church. When the character of Christ shall be perfectly reproduced the His people, then He will come to claim them as His own.

It is the privilege of every Christian not only to look for but to hasten the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, (2 Peter 3:12, margin). Were all who profess His name bearing fruit to His glory, how quickly the whole world would be sown with the seed of the gospel. Quickly the last great harvest would be ripened, and Christ would come to gather the precious grain.

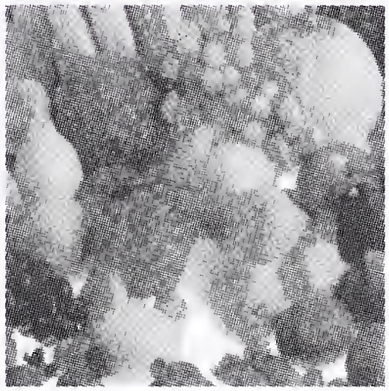
Christ's Object Lessons, 67-69

Choose Self-Control

I choose self-control. I am a spiritual being. After this body is dead, I refuse to let what will rot, rule the eternal. I choose self-control. I will be drunk only by joy. I will be impassioned only by my faith. I will be influenced only by God. I will be taught only by Christ. I choose self-control.

Max Lucado

Chapter 9



SELF-CONTROL
Ninth Fruit of the Spirit

The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

Galatians 5:22, 23 (NIV)

DEFINITION:

Greek–engkrateia; moderation and control in attitude, appetites, and actions; restraint: the ability to control your own behavior, especially in terms of reactions and impulses; self-restraint in the face of temptation or desire

SYNONYMS:

self-discipline, moderation, temperate, control, strength of will

INSIGHT:

God expects his people to exercise self-control. Freedom in Christ does not give believers liberty to cast off all moral restraint. Nor does it call for a withdrawal from life and its temptations. Having self-control calls for a self-disciplined life that follows Christ's example of being in the world but not of the world. Self-control is the ability to say "yes" to the right and "no" to the wrong.

81. SELF-CONTROL DISCIPLINES EMOTIONS

(Numbers 20:6-13, GW)

Moses and Aaron went from the assembly to the entrance of the tent of meeting. Immediately, they bowed with their faces touching the ground, and the glory of the Lord appeared to them.

The Lord said to Moses, "Take your staff, then you and your brother Aaron gather the community. Right before their eyes, tell the rock to give up its water. In this way you will give the community water from the rock for them and their animals to drink."

Moses took his staff out of the tent in the Lord's presence as he had been commanded. Then Moses and Aaron assembled the community in front of the rock and said to them, "Listen, you rebels, must we bring water out of this rock for you?" Moses raised his hand and hit the rock twice with the staff. Water came pouring out, and all the people and their animals drank.

But the Lord said to Moses and Aaron, "You didn't trust me! You didn't show the Israelites how holy I am! So you will not bring this congregation into the land I'm giving them."

This was the oasis of Meribah [Complaining], where the Israelites complained about the Lord and where he showed them he was holy.

82. SELF-CONTROL DOES WHAT IS RIGHT

(Exodus 32:19-26, NIV)

When Moses approached the camp and saw the calf and the dancing, his anger burned and he threw the tablets out of his hands, breaking them to pieces at the foot of the mountain. And he took the calf they had made and burned it in the fire; then he ground it to powder, scattered it on the water and made the Israelites drink it.

He said to Aaron, "What did these people do to you, that you led them into such great sin?"

"Do not be angry, my lord," Aaron answered. "You know how prone these people are to evil. They said to me, 'Make us gods who will go before us. As for this fellow Moses who brought us up out of Egypt, we don't know what has happened to him.' So I told them, 'Whoever has any gold jewelry, take it off.' Then they gave me the gold, and I threw it into the fire, and out came this calf!"

Moses saw that the people were running wild and that Aaron had let them get out of control and so become a laughingstock to their enemies. So he stood at the entrance to the camp and said, "Whoever is for the Lord, come to me." And all the Levites rallied to him.

83. SELF-CONTROL DISCIPLINES THE LIFE

(1 Corinthians 9:19-27, MsgB)

Even though I am free of the demands and expectations of everyone, I have voluntarily become a servant to any and all in order to reach a wide range of people: religious, nonreligious, meticulous moralists, loose-living immoralists, the defeated, the demoralized—whoever. I didn't take on their way of life. I kept my bearings in Christ—but I entered their world and tried to experience things from their point of view. I've become just about every sort of servant there is in my attempts to lead those I meet into a God saved life. I did all this because of the Message. I didn't just want to talk about it; I wanted to be in on it!

You've all been to the stadium and seen the athletes race. Everyone runs; one wins. Run to win. All good athletes train hard. They do it for a gold medal that tarnishes and fades. You're after one that's gold eternally.

I don't know about you, but I'm running hard for the finish line. I'm giving it everything I've got. No sloppy living for me! I'm staying alert and in top condition. I'm not going to get caught napping, telling everyone else all about it and then missing out myself.

84. SELF-CONTROL HAS INFLUENCE OVER APPETITE

(Daniel 1:8-17, NIV)

But Daniel resolved not to defile himself with the royal food and wine, and he asked the chief official for permission not to defile himself this way. Now God had caused the official to show favor and sympathy to Daniel, but the official told Daniel, "I am afraid of my lord the king, who has assigned your food and drink. Why should he see you looking worse than the other young men your age? The king would then have my head because of you."

Daniel then said to the guard whom the chief official had appointed over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah, "Please test your servants for ten days: Give us nothing but vegetables to eat and water to drink. Then compare our appearance with that of the young men who eat the royal food, and treat your servants in accordance with what you see." So he agreed to this and tested them for ten days.

At the end of the ten days they looked healthier and better nourished than any of the young men who ate the royal food. So the guard took away their choice food and the wine they were to drink and gave them vegetables instead.

To these four young men God gave knowledge and understanding of all kinds of literature and learning. And Daniel could understand visions and dreams of all kinds.

85. SELF-CONTROL RESTRAINS PASSION

(2 Samuel 11:1-5, MsgB)

When that time of year came around again, the anniversary of the Ammonite aggression, David dispatched Joab and his fighting men of Israel in full force to destroy the Ammonites for good. They laid siege to Rabbah, but David stayed in Jerusalem.

One late afternoon, David got up from taking his nap and was strolling on the roof of the palace. From his vantage point on the roof he saw a woman bathing. The woman was stunningly beautiful. David sent to ask about her, and was told, "Isn't this Bathsheba, daughter of Eliam and wife of Uriah the Hittite?" David sent his agents to get her. After she arrived, he went to bed with her. (This occurred during the time of "purification" following her period.) Then she returned home. Before long she realized she was pregnant.

Later she sent word to David: "I'm pregnant."

86. SELF-CONTROL IS FUTURE THINKING

(Titus 2:1-15, NIV)

You must teach what is in accord with sound doctrine. Teach the older men to be temperate, worthy of respect, self-controlled, and sound in faith, in love and in endurance.

Likewise, teach the older women to be reverent in the way they live, not to be slanderers or addicted to much wine, but to teach what is

good. Then they can train the younger women to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled and pure, to be busy at home, to be kind, and to be subject to their husbands, so that no one will malign the word of God.

Similarly, encourage the young men to be self-controlled. In everything set them an example by doing what is good. In your teaching show integrity, seriousness and soundness of speech that cannot be condemned, so that those who oppose you may be ashamed because they have nothing bad to say about us.

Teach slaves to be subject to their masters in everything, to try to please them, not to talk back to them, and not to steal from them, but to show that they can be fully trusted, so that in every way they will make the teaching about God our Savior attractive.

For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, while we wait for the blessed hope–the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.

These, then, are the things you should teach. Encourage and rebuke with all authority. Do not let anyone despise you.

87. SELF-CONTROL NEEDS ALERTNESS

(1 Thessalonians 5:1-10, NIV)

Now, brothers, about times and dates we do not need to write to you, for you know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. While people are saying, "Peace and safety," destruction will come on them suddenly, as labor pains on a pregnant woman, and they will not escape.

But you, brothers, are not in darkness so that this day should surprise you like a thief. You are all sons of the light and sons of the day. We do not belong to the night or to the darkness. So then, let us not be like others, who are asleep, but let us be alert and self-controlled.

For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, get drunk at night. But since we belong to the day, let us be self-controlled, putting on faith and love as a breastplate, and the hope of salvation as a helmet. For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. He died for us so that, whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with him.

88. SELF-CONTROL IS ACTIVE

(1 Peter 1:8-13, NIV)

Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, for you are receiving the goal of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

Concerning this salvation, the prophets, who spoke of the grace that was to come to you, searched intently and with the greatest care, trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow. It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves but you, when they spoke of the things that have now been told you by those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven. Even angels long to look into these things.

Therefore, prepare your minds for action; be self-controlled; set your hope fully on the grace to be given you when Jesus Christ is revealed.

89. SELF-CONTROL GIVES POWER

(2 Timothy 1:7-14, NIV)

For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline.

So do not be ashamed to testify about our Lord, or ashamed of me his prisoner. But join with me in suffering for the gospel, by the power of God, who has saved us and called us to a holy life–not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time, but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and has brought life and immor-

tality to light through the gospel. And of this gospel I was appointed a herald and an apostle and a teacher. That is why I am suffering as I am. Yet I am not ashamed, because I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him for that day.

What you heard from me, keep as the pattern of sound teaching, with faith and love in Christ Jesus. Guard the good deposit that was entrusted to you– guard it with the help of the Holy Spirit who lives in us.

90. SELF-CONTROL IS DEVELOPMENTAL

(2 Peter 1:3-12, GW)

God's divine power has given us everything we need for life and for godliness. This power was given to us through knowledge of the one who called us by his own glory and integrity. Through his glory and integrity he has given us his promises that are of the highest value. Through these promises you will share in the divine nature because you have escaped the corruption that sinful desires cause in the world.

Because of this, make every effort to add integrity to your faith; and to integrity add knowledge; to knowledge add self-control; to self-control add endurance; to endurance add godliness; to godliness add Christian affection; and to Christian affection add love. If you have these qualities and they are increasing, it demonstrates that your knowledge about our Lord Jesus Christ is living and productive. If

these qualities aren't present in your life, you're shortsighted and have forgotten that you were cleansed from your past sins. Therefore, brothers and sisters, use more effort to make God's calling and choosing of you secure.

If you keep doing this, you will never fall away. Then you will also be given the wealth of entering into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Therefore, I will always remind you about these qualities, although you already know about them and are well-grounded in the truth that you now have.

A compass is narrow-minded—it always points to the magnetic north. It seems that is a very narrow view, but a compass is not broad-minded. It if were, all the ships at sea and all the planes in the air would be in danger. We must discipline ourselves, personally to fight any deviation from the course Jesus set for us. We cannot be tolerant of any other course. To deviate is to sin.

Billy Graham

MAKING SELF-CONTROL A PART OF ME

PERSONAL INVENTORY

1. Define Self-Control in your own words.

2. Assuming that Love is the most important of the nine Fruit of the Spirit, of the remaining eight traits, what ranking do you give Self-Control?

3. Rate how important Self-Control is to you.

❑ Not Important ❑ Average Importance ❑ Very Important

4. Honestly evaluate yourself in light of Self-Control and score yourself on this trait (check one).

❑ I am not self-controlled –I constantly struggle with self-control.
❑ I generally am not self-controlled–but sometimes I manage to be.
❑ I am self-controlled most of the time–I feel comfortable with it.
❑ I am self-controlled all of the time–it is one of my strengths.

5. Based on the insights in this section and your own knowledge of Self-Control, how can you increase this trait in your life?

6. If you were to ask God for more Self-Control, exactly what would you ask Him for?

7. Can you think of any positives if you more actively incorporate Self-Control in your life?

8. Can you think of any negatives if you don't incorporate Self-Control in your life?

9. Emotional Intelligence (EI) is understanding and managing your own emotions and being ensitive to and successfully responding to the emotions of other people. Briefly explain how Self-Control can help in this process.

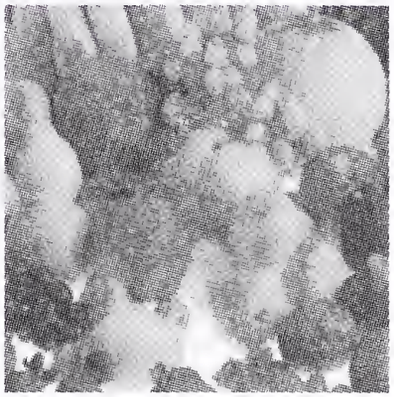
10. Share this Personal Inventory with significant persons in your life. Seek their honest opinion and feedback. How did they respond to these queries? Did they agree or disagree with your assessment? Did they have any suggestions or concerns?

The Fruit Commitment

Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. To these I commit my day. If I succeed, I will give thanks. If I fail, I will seek His grace.

Max Lucado

Chapter 10



Applying Fruit of the Spirit:

Eleven Principles for Practically Applying the Fruit of the Spirit (Inspirational Writings)

DEFINITION OF FRUIT:

Greek–karpos; the product or consequence of something done; offspring; produce of something grown or harvested

SYNONYMS FOR FRUIT:

produce, harvest, crop, yield, bounty

INSIGHT ABOUT FRUIT:

As the visible expressions of hidden lust are the works of the flesh, so the fruit are the visible outcomes of the influence of the invisible power of the Holy Spirit. The fruit are grown through the combination of a willing and committed believer and a powerful, facilitating Holy Spirit. Fruit is the outcome of this dynamic partnership.

91. CHOOSING LOVE

The man who loves God meditates on the law of God day and night. He is instant in season and out of season. He bears the fruit of a branch vitally connected with the Vine. As he has opportunity, he does good; and everywhere, at all times and in all places, he finds opportunity to work for God. He is one of the Lord's evergreen trees; and he carries fragrance with him wherever he goes. A wholesome atmosphere surrounds his soul.

The beauty of his well-ordered life and godly conversation inspires faith and hope and courage in others. This is Christianity in practice. Seek to be an evergreen tree. Wear the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. Cherish the grace of love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness. This is the fruit of the Christian tree. Planted by the rivers of water, it always brings forth its fruit in due season.

If we have the love of Christ in our souls, it will be a natural consequence for us to have all the other graces–joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. . . . When the love of Christ is enshrined in the heart, . . . His presence will be felt.

My Life Today, pp. 50-56

92. CHOOSING JOY

Those who are learning at the feet of Jesus will surely exemplify by their deportment and conversation the character of Christ. . . . Their experience is marked less with bustle and excitement than with a subdued and reverent joy. Their love for Christ is a quiet, peaceful, yet all-controlling power. The light and love of an indwelling Saviour are revealed in every word and every act.

There have been times when the blessing of God has been bestowed in answer to prayer, so that when others have come into the room, no sooner did they step over the threshold than they exclaimed, "The Lord is here!"

Not a word had been uttered, but the blessed influence of God's holy presence was sensibly felt. The joy that comes from Jesus Christ was there; and in this sense the Lord had been in the room just as verily as He walked through the streets of Jerusalem, or appeared to the disciples when they were in the upper chamber, and said, "Peace be unto you."

My Life Today, pp. 50-56

93. CHOOSING PEACE

The Lord has determined that every soul who obeys His word shall have His joy, His peace, His continual keeping power. Such men and women are brought near Him always, not only when they kneel before Him in prayer, but when they take up the duties of life. He has prepared for them an abiding place with Himself, where the life is purified from all grossness, all unloveliness. By this unbroken communion with Him, they are made colaborers with Him in their lifework.

Words cannot describe the peace and joy possessed by him who takes God at His word. Trials do not disturb him, slights do not vex him. Self is crucified. Day by day his duties may become more taxing, his temptations stronger, his trials more severe; but he does not falter; for he receives strength equal to his need.

My Life Today, pp. 50-56

94. CHOOSING PATIENCE (LONGSUFFERING)

"Long-suffering" is patience with offence; long endurance. If you are long-suffering, you will not impart to others your supposed knowledge of your brother's mistakes and errors. You will seek to help and save him, because he has been purchased with the blood of Christ. "Tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee,

thou hast gained thy brother." "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such a one in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." To be long-suffering is not to be gloomy and sad, sour and hardhearted; it is to be exactly the opposite.

Try to live peaceably with all men, and let the atmosphere surrounding your soul be sweet and fragrant. The Lord hears every unwise word that is spoken. If you will battle against selfish human nature, you will go forward steadily in the work of overcoming hereditary and cultivated tendencies to wrong.

By patience, long-suffering, and forbearance you will accomplish much. Remember that you cannot be humiliated by the unwise speeches of someone else, but that when you answer unwisely, you lose a victory that you might have gained. Be very careful of your words. Forbearance and unselfishness mark the words and deeds of those who are born again to live the new life in Christ.

My Life Today, pp. 50-56

95. CHOOSING KINDNESS (GENTLENESS)

True gentleness is a gem of great value in the sight of God.

We want a spirit of gentleness. We cannot live right in the family circle without it. In order to have the proper control of our children, we must manifest a spirit of gentleness and of meekness and of long-suf-

fering. We do not want to have a faultfinding, fretful, scolding spirit. If we teach them to have a spirit of gentleness, we must have a spirit of gentleness ourselves; . . . if we would have them manifest a spirit of love toward us, we must manifest a gentle, loving spirit toward them. But at the same time there need be no weakness or unwise indulgence on the part of parents.

No member of the family can enclose himself within himself, where other members of the family shall not feel his influence and spirit. The very expression of the countenance has an influence for good or evil. His spirit, his words, his actions, his attitude toward others, are unmistakable.

If he is filled with the love of Christ, he will manifest courtesy, kindness, tender regard for the feelings of others, and will communicate to his associates, by his acts of love, a tender, grateful, happy feeling. It will be made manifest that he is living for Jesus. . . . He will be able to say to the Lord, "Thy gentleness hath made me great."

My Life Today, pp. 50-56

96. CHOOSING GOODNESS

True goodness is accounted of Heaven as true greatness. The condition of the moral affections determines the worth of the man. A person may have property and intellect, and yet be valueless, because the glowing fire of goodness has never burned upon the altar of his heart.

Goodness is the result of divine power transforming human nature.

By believing in Christ, the fallen race he has redeemed may obtain that faith which works by love and purifies the soul from all defilement. Then Christlike attributes appear: for by beholding Christ men become changed into the same image from glory to glory, from character to character. Good fruit is produced. The character is fashioned after the divine similitude, and integrity, uprightness, and true benevolence are manifested toward the sinful race.

The Lord has placed every human being on test and trial. He desires to prove and to try us, to see if we will be good and do good in this life, to see if he can trust us with eternal riches, and make us members of the royal family, children of the heavenly King.

There is no limit to the good you may do. If you make the Word of God the rule of your life, and govern your actions by its precepts, making all your purposes and exertions in the fulfilling of your duty a blessing and not a curse to others, success will crown your efforts. You have placed yourself in connection with God; you have become a channel of light to others.

My Life Today, pp. 50-56

97. CHOOSING FAITHFULNESS

The faith that strengthened Habakkuk and all the holy and the just in those days of deep trial was the same faith that sustains God's people today. In the darkest hours, under circumstances the most forbidding, the Christian believer may keep his soul stayed upon the source of all light and power.

Day by day, through faith in God, his hope and courage may be renewed. "The just shall live by his faith." In the service of God there need be no despondency, no wavering, no fear. The Lord will more than fulfill the highest expectations of those who put their trust in Him. He will give them the wisdom their varied necessities demand. . . .

We must cherish and cultivate the faith of which prophets and apostles have testified–the faith that lays hold on the promises of God and waits for deliverance in His appointed time and way. The sure word of prophecy will meet its final fulfillment in the glorious Advent of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, as King of kings and Lord of lords.

The time of waiting may seem long, the soul may be oppressed by discouraging circumstances, many in whom confidence has been placed may fall by the way; but with the prophet [Habakkuk] who endeavored to encourage Judah in a time of unparalleled apostasy, let us confidently declare, "The Lord is in His holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before Him." Let us ever hold in remembrance the cheering message, "The vision is yet for an appointed time . . . : though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry. . . . The just shall live by his faith."

My Life Today, pp. 50-56

98. CHOOSING GENTLENESS

Jesus loves the young. . . . He bids them learn of him meekness and lowliness of heart. This precious grace is rarely seen in the youth of the present day, even in those who profess to be Christians. Their own ways seem right in their eyes. In accepting the name of Christ they do not accept His character or submit to wear His yoke; therefore they know nothing of the joy and peace to be found in His service.

Meekness is a precious grace, willing to suffer silently, willing to endure trials. Meekness is patient and labors to be happy under all circumstances. Meekness is always thankful and makes its own songs of happiness, making melody in the heart of God. Meekness will suffer disappointment and wrong and will not retaliate.

It is not the seeking to climb to eminence that will make you great in God's sight, but it is the humble life of goodness, of fidelity that will make you the object of the heavenly angels' special guardianship. The Pattern Man . . . lived nearly thirty years in an obscure Galilean town, hidden away among the hills. All the angel host was at His command, yet He did not claim to be anything great or exalted. . . . He was a carpenter, working for wages, a servant to those for whom He labored, showing that heaven may be very near to us in the common walks of life, and that angels from the heavenly courts will take charge of the steps of those who come and go at God's command. The perfect fruit of faith, meekness, and love often matures best amid storm clouds and darkness.

My Life Today, pp. 56

99. CHOOSING SELF-CONTROL

As Daniel and his fellows were brought to the test, they placed themselves fully on the side of righteousness and truth. They did not move capriciously, but intelligently. They decided that as flesh-meat had not composed their diet in the past, it should not come into their diet in the future, and as wine had been prohibited to all who should engage in the service of God, they determined that they would not partake of it. . . . These particulars were placed on record in the history of the children of Israel as a warning to every youth to avoid all customs and practices and indulgences that would in any way dishonor God.

Daniel and his companions knew not what would be the result of their decision; they knew not but that it would cost them their lives; but they determined to keep the straight path of strict temperance even when in the courts of licentious Babylon.

This officer saw in Daniel good traits of character. He saw that he was striving to be kind and helpful, that his words were respectful and courteous, and his manner possessed the grace of modesty and meekness. It was the good behavior of the youth that gained for him the favor and love of the prince.

In taking this step, Daniel did not act rashly. He knew that by the time he was called to appear before the king, the advantage of healthful living would be apparent. Cause would be followed by effect. . . . Daniel knew that ten days would be time enough to prove the benefit of abstemiousness. . . . Having done this, Daniel and his companions

did still more. They did not choose as companions those who were agents of the prince of darkness. They did not go with a multitude to do evil. They secured Melzar as their friend, and there was no friction between him and them. They went to him for advice, and at the same time enlightened him by the wisdom of their deportment.

When the four Hebrew youth were receiving an education for the king's court in Babylon, they did not feel that the blessing of the Lord was a substitute for the taxing effort required of them. They were diligent in study; for they discerned that through the grace of God their destiny depended upon their own will and action. They were to bring all their ability to the work; and by close, severe taxation of their powers, they were to make the most of their opportunities for study and labor.

While these youth were working out their own salvation, God was working in them to will and to do of His good pleasure. Here are revealed the conditions of success. To make God's grace our own, we must act our part. The Lord does not propose to perform for us either the willing or the doing. His grace is given to work in us to will and to do, but never as a substitute for our effort. Our souls are to be aroused to cooperate. The Holy Spirit works in us, that we may work out our own salvation. This is the practical lesson the Holy Spirit is striving to teach us.

SDA Bible Commentary, Vol. 4, pp. 1166-1167

100. CHOOSING TO SERVE OTHERS

There can be no growth or fruitfulness in the life that is centered in self. If you have accepted Christ as a personal Saviour, you are to forget yourself, and try to help others. Talk of the love of Christ, tell of His goodness. Do every duty that presents itself. Carry the burden of souls upon your heart, and by every means in your power seek to save the lost.

As you receive the Spirit of Christ–the Spirit of unselfish love and labor for others–you will grow and bring forth fruit. The graces of the Spirit will ripen in your character. Your faith will increase, your convictions deepen, your love be made perfect. More and more you will reflect the likeness of Christ in all that is pure, noble, and lovely.

"When the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come." Christ is waiting with longing desire for the manifestation of Himself in His church. When the character of Christ shall be perfectly reproduced in His people, then He will come to claim them as His own.

It is the privilege of every Christian not only to look for but to hasten the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Were all who profess His name bearing fruit to His glory, how quickly the whole world would be sown with the seed of the gospel. Quickly the last great harvest would be ripened, and Christ would come to gather the precious grain.

Christ Object Lessons, pp. 67-69

101. CHOOSING FOR THE LOVE OF CHRIST

It is true that there may be an outward correctness of deportment without the renewing power of Christ. The love of influence and the desire for the esteem of others may produce a well-ordered life. Self-respect may lead us to avoid the appearance of evil. A selfish heart may perform generous actions. By what means, then, shall we determine whose side we are on?

Who has the heart? With whom are our thoughts? Of whom do we love to converse? Who has our warmest affections and our best energies? If we are Christ's, our thoughts are with Him, and our sweetest thoughts are of Him. All we have and are is consecrated to Him. We long to bear His image, breathe His spirit, do His will, and please Him in all things.

Those who become new creatures in Christ Jesus will bring forth the fruits of the Spirit, "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." They will no longer fashion themselves according to the former lusts, but by the faith of the Son of God they will follow in His steps, reflect His character, and purify themselves even as He is pure.

The things they once hated they now love, and the things they once loved they hate. The proud and self-assertive become meek and lowly in heart. The vain and supercilious become serious and unobtrusive. The drunken become sober, and the profligate pure. The vain customs and fashions of the world are laid aside.

Steps to Christ, p. 58

It is said in praise of the tree firmly planted by the rivers of water that it brings forth its fruit in its season. Good people should aim to have seasonal virtues (fruit). For instance, a forgiving spirit is golden if it displays itself in the moment when an injury is received. It is but silver if it shows itself on speedy reflection. And it is merely lead if it be manifested only after a long time of cooling.

Charles Spurgeon

CHOOSING FRUIT IN MY LIFE

PERSONAL INVENTORY

1. Define what Application and Follow-Through (A&F) are in your own words.

2. Assuming that you desire the Fruit of the Spirit, what do you think is the best way to make these traits a part of your life?

3. Why do you think that the application of the traits is difficult for so many people?

4. Honestly evaluate yourself and assess your follow-through ability as it relates to personal change

- ❑ I am not good at application and follow-through (A&F).
- ❑ I generally am not good at A&F.
- ❑ I am good at A&F most of the time–I feel comfortable with A&F.
- ❑ I am excellent at A&F–it's one of my strengths.

5. Based on the insights in this section and your own knowledge of change and Personal Goal Setting, how can you best develop A&F?

6. If you were to ask God for better (A&F), exactly what would you ask Him for?

7. Can you think of any positives if you more actively incorporate A&F in your life?

8. Can you think of any negatives if you don't incorporate A&F in your life?

9. Emotional Intelligence (EI) is understanding and managing your own emotions and being sensitive to and successfully responding to the emotions of other people. Briefly explain how (A&F) can help in this process.

10. Share this Personal Inventory with significant persons in your life. Seek their honest opinion and feedback. How did they respond to these queries? Did they agree or disagree with your assessment? Did they have any suggestions or concerns?

The Fruit of the Spirit

The fruit of the Spirit is love, and it is manifested in joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self control.

JOY is love's strength
PEACE is love's security
PATIENCE is love's endurance
KINDNESS is love's conduct
GOODNESS is love's character
FAITHFULNESS is love's confidence
GENTLENESS is love's humility
SELF-CONTROL is love's victory

The Greatest of these is Love!

Anonymous

LOVE is the key.
JOY is love singing.
PEACE is love resting.
PATIENCE is love enduring.
KINDNESS is love's touch.
GOODNESS is love's character.
FAITHFULNESS is love's habit.
GENTLENESS is love's self-forgetfulness.
SELF-CONTROL is love holding the reins.

Donald Barnhouse

APPENDIX SECTION

Fruit of the Spirit Resources

APPENDIX ONE: WORKS OF THE FLESH AND FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

(Galatians 5:19-23)

A. King James Version

Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

B. New International Version

The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy,

fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

C. The Message

It is obvious what kind of life develops out of trying to get your own way all the time: repetitive, loveless, cheap sex; a stinking accumulation of mental and emotional garbage; frenzied and joyless grabs for happiness; trinket gods; magic-show religion; paranoid loneliness; cut-throat competition; all-consuming-yet-never-satisfied wants; a brutal temper; an impotence to love or be loved; divided homes and divided lives; small-minded and lopsided pursuits; the vicious habit of depersonalizing everyone into a rival; uncontrolled and uncontrollable addictions; ugly parodies of community. I could go on. This isn't the first time I have warned you, you know. If you use your freedom this way, you will not inherit God's kingdom.

But what happens when we live God's way? He brings gifts into our lives, much the same way that fruit appears in an orchard—things like affection for others, exuberance about life, serenity. We develop a willingness to stick with things, a sense of compassion in the heart, and a conviction that a basic holiness permeates things and people. We find ourselves involved in loyal commitments, not needing to force our way

in life, able to marshal and direct our energies wisely. Legalism is helpless in bringing this about; it only gets in the way.

D. Fruit of the Spirit: A Summary

An expression taken from Galatians 5:22-23, the fruit of the Spirit refers to the evidence that the Spirit of God lives and reigns in a person's life. The fruit of the Spirit, as listed in Galatians 5:1, is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

"Love" is that self-giving kind of action, not necessarily emotion, that God himself showed when he loved the world so much that he gave his only Son (John 3:16). "Goodness" is the translation of a Greek word that suggests the idea of generosity. The word "faith" refers usually to trust or confidence in someone or something. However, the word can also mean faithfulness and reliability, the things that cause people to have faith. Both meanings are suggested by the word used in Galatians. Another fruit, translated "temperance" in the King James Version, is the Greek word for self-control, that ability to hold oneself in.

Since these qualities are the fruit of the Spirit, legalism and obedience to law cannot create them. In the part of his letter where Paul describes the fruit of the Spirit, he is describing the way Christians are free from the law that is, they don't need to keep it in order to have God justify them; God has done so in Jesus Christ.

Paul warns the Galatians Christians that one cannot be justified by circumcision (Galatians 5:3). But Paul also cautions that "freedom in

Christ" does not mean license to sin, but rather an opportunity to continue as loving servants, belonging to one another (5:13). Life in the Spirit means that one will not fulfill the desires of the old, pre-Christ sin nature (5:16). Then Paul describes both the works of the sin nature and the fruits of the Spirit. A person who is abstaining from the works of the flesh and is demonstrating the fruit of the Spirit in her or his life will be loving, joyful, peaceful, patient, kind, good, dependable, gentle, and self-controlled.

iLumina Gold

APPENDIX TWO: QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

A. Why is the list called the Fruit of the Spirit?

The traits listed in Galatians 5:22-23 are referred to as the Fruit of the Spirit because they result from the influence of the Holy Spirit Word. See other similar parallel phrases from the New Testament:

"Fruit of the Spirit"	(Galatians 5:22)
"mind of the Spirit"	(Romans 8:27)
"spiritually minded"	(Romans 8:6)
"the things of the Spirit"	(Romans 8:5)
"mind of Christ"	(1 Corinthians 2:16, Philippians.2:5)

"Spirit of Christ"	(Romans 8:9)
"Spirit of life in Christ Jesus"	(Romans 8:2)
"Walk in the Spirit"	(Galatians 5:16)

All these phrases are referring to a similar point. They refer to a mind dominated by spiritual thinking; that is, thinking that is under the influence of the Holy Spirit versus being under secular influences. Of course, the influence of the Holy Spirit doesn't do away with the need for individual choice and effort. One complements the other.

B. How many Fruit of the Spirit are there?

For the sake of this QuoteBook we have listed nine fruit. But deeper study will indicate that it might not be that simplistic. Questions arise over the number of fruit due to the manner in which Paul refers to it in Galatians 5. He says "the fruit of the Spirit is . . ." Fruit here is singular versus plural. There is considerable study on the topic, but for the sake of brevity we will reduce the discussion to three different approaches to 'the number of fruit question':

Approach One: There are nine fruit of the Spirit. Love fruit, joy fruit, etc.

Approach Two: The fruit of the Spirit is ninefold, meaning that there is a single fruit made up of nine parts–love, joy, etc.

Approach Three: The fruit of the Spirit is love. That is, there is one fruit and the following items are eight aspects of the one love fruit. This approach would be: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, (comprising) joy, peace, longsuffering . . . ."

While each of the approaches has some merit, the third approach seems to have grammatical support and it rightly focuses emphasis on love as the premier quality of the Christian. But, again, for the sake of convenience in this QuoteBook, we have chosen to use Approach One and list the nine traits, each as Fruit of the Spirit. By the grace of God, let us seek to strive for and nurture each of them.

C. How did Christ's life model the Fruit of the Spirit?

Christ is the model, the perfect pattern of One who lived and personified the fruit of the Spirit. His life is the rule, the standard, and model for us. Christ exhibited the fruit of the Spirit to perfection, to the highest degree. The following are some Scripture references that illustrate this point.

God is LOVE."
1 John 4:16)
"... love one another as I have LOVED you"
(John 15:12)
"... that my JOY might remain in you..."
(John 15:11)
"... my PEACE I give unto you..."
(John 14:27)
"... Jesus Christ might shew forth all LONGSUFFERING."
(1 Timothy 1:16)
"... the Lord [Jesus] is gracious [KIND = GENTLENESS]
(1 Peter 2.3)

"Can any GOOD thing come out of Nazareth?... Come and see"
(John 1:46)
"... Christ Jesus who was FAITHFUL to him that appointed HIM" (Hebrews 3:2)
"...by the MEEKNESS and gentleness of CHRIST"
(2 Corinthians 10:1)
"Every man [including Christ] that striveth for the mastery is TEMPERATE in all THINGS"
(1 Corinthians 9:25)

APPENDIX THREE: BIBLE EXAMPLES WHO MODELED SPIRIT TRAITS

The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Galatians 5:22-23 (NIV)

Love: Jonathan and David – 1 Samuel 20 (see also 1 Samuel 13-31)

O my dear brother Jonathan, I'm crushed by your death. Your friendship was a miracle-wonder, love far exceeding anything I've known—or ever hope to know. 2 Samuel 1:26 (MsgB)

Joy: Hannah – 1 Samuel 2:1-10 (see also 1 Samuel 1-2)

Hannah said, "Oh no, sir—please! I'm a woman hard used. I haven't been drinking. Not a drop of wine or beer. The only thing I've been pouring out is my heart, pouring it out to God. Don't for a

minute think I'm a bad woman. It's because I'm so desperately unhappy and in such pain that I've stayed here so long." Eli answered her, "Go in peace. And may the God of Israel give you what you have asked of him." "Think well of me—and pray for me!" she said, and went her way. Then she ate heartily, her face radiant. 1 Samuel 1:15-18 (MsgB)

Peace: Abigail – 1 Samuel 25:32, 33 (see also 1 Samuel 25-2 Samuel 2)

David said, "Blessed be God, the God of Israel. He sent you to meet me! And blessed be your good sense! Bless you for keeping me from murder and taking charge of looking out for me. Samuel 25:32-33 (MsgB)

Patience: Joseph – Genesis 41: (see also Genesis 30-50)

Don't you see, you planned evil against me but God used those same plans for my good, as you see all around you right now—life for many people. Genesis 50:20 (MsgB)

Kindness: Rahab – Joshua 2:2-13 (see also Joshua 2, 6:22, 23; Matthew 1:5; James 2:25)

By an act of faith, Rahab, the Jericho harlot, welcomed the spies and escaped the destruction that came on those who refused to trust God. Hebrews 11:31 (MsgB)

Goodness: Barnabus – Acts 4:36, 37; 9:27—15:39 (see also 1 Cor 9:6; Gal 2:1, 9, 13; Col 4:10)

As soon as he arrived, he saw that God was behind and in it all. He threw himself in with them, got behind them, urging them to stay with

it the rest of their lives. He was a good man that way, enthusiastic and confident in the Holy Spirit's ways. The community grew large and strong in the Master. Acts 11:23-24 (MsgB)

Faithfulness: Esther – Book of Esther
"Go and get all the Jews living in Susa together. Fast for me. Don't eat or drink for three days, either day or night. I and my maids will fast with you. If you will do this, I'll go to the king, even though it's forbidden. If I die, I die." Esther 4:16 (MsgB)

Gentleness: Boaz – Ruth 2-4 (see also Matt 1:5)
Boaz then addressed the elders and all the people in the town square that day: "You are witnesses today that I have bought from Naomi everything that belonged to Elimelech and Chilion and Mahlon, including responsibility for Ruth the foreigner, the widow of Mahlon—I'll take her as my wife and keep the name of the deceased alive along with his inheritance. The memory and reputation of the deceased is not going to disappear out of this family or from his hometown. To all this you are witnesses this very day."

Self-Control: Hebrew Boys – Daniel 3 (see also Daniel 1)
Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego answered King Nebuchadnezzar, "Your threat means nothing to us. If you throw us in the fire, the God we serve can rescue us from your roaring furnace and anything else you might cook up, O king. But even if he doesn't, it wouldn't make a bit of difference, O king. We still wouldn't serve your gods or worship the gold statue you set up." Daniel 3:16-18 (MsgB)

APPENDIX FOUR: TIPS ON NURTURING FRUIT

A. Love: the Greatest Fruit

Wherever there is union with Christ there is love. Whatever other fruits we may bear, if love be missing, they profit nothing. Love to God and our neighbor is the very essence of our religion. No one can love Christ and not love His children. When we are united to Christ, we have the mind of Christ. Purity and love shine forth in the character, meekness and truth control the life. The very expression of the countenance is changed. Christ abiding in the soul exerts a transforming power, and the outward aspect bears witness to the peace and joy that reign within.

We drink in the love of Christ, as the branch draws nourishment from the vine. If we are grafted in Christ, if fiber by fiber we have been united with the Living Vine, we shall give evidence of the fact by bearing rich clusters of living fruit. If we are connected with the Light, we shall be channels of light, and in our words and works we shall reflect light to the world. Those who are truly Christians are bound with the chain of love which links earth to heaven, which binds finite man to the infinite God. The light that shines in the face of Jesus Christ shines in the hearts of His followers, to the glory of God.

Selected Messages, vol 1, p. 337

B. Power Hook-Up for Growth

The apparently dry branch, by being connected with the living vine, becomes a part of it. Fiber by fiber, and vein by vein, it adheres to the vine till it derives its life and nourishment from the parent stock. The graft buds, blossoms, and produces fruit. The soul, dead in trespasses and sins, must experience a similar process in order to be reconciled to God and to become a partaker of Christ's life and joy.

As the graft receives life when united to the vine, so the sinner partakes of the divine nature when connected with Christ. Finite man is united with the infinite God. When thus united, the words of Christ abide in us, and we are not actuated by a spasmodic feeling, but by a living, abiding principle. The words of Christ must be meditated upon and cherished and enshrined in the heart. They should not be repeated, parrot-like, finding no place in the memory and having no influence over the heart and life.

As the branch must abide in the vine to obtain the vital sap which causes it to flourish, so those who love God and keep all His sayings must abide in His love. Without Christ we cannot subdue a single sin or overcome the smallest temptation. . . ."As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in Me." All who are really in Christ will experience the benefit of this union. The Father accepts them in the Beloved, and they become objects of His solicitude and tender, loving care. This connection with Christ will result in the purification of the heart and in a circumspect life and faultless character. The fruit borne upon the Christian tree is

"love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance."

Testimonies, vol 4, pp. 354-355

C. Faith and Work: Secrets to Growing Fruit

Those who are waiting to behold a magical change in their characters without determined effort on their part to overcome sin, will be disappointed. We have no reason to fear while looking to Jesus, no reason to doubt but that He is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto Him; but we may constantly fear lest our old nature will again obtain the supremacy, that the enemy shall devise some snare whereby we shall again become his captives.

We are to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God that worketh in you to will and to do of His good pleasure. With our limited powers we are to be as holy in our sphere as God is holy in His sphere. To the extent of our ability, we are to make manifest the truth and love and excellence of the divine character. As wax takes the impression of the seal, so the soul is to take the impression of the Spirit of God and retain the image of Christ.

We are to grow daily in spiritual loveliness. We shall fail often in our efforts to copy the divine pattern. We shall often have to bow down to weep at the feet of Jesus, because of our shortcomings and mistakes; but we are not to be discouraged; we are to pray more fervently, believe more fully, and try again with more steadfastness to grow into the likeness of our Lord. As we distrust our own power, we shall trust

the power of our Redeemer, and render praise to God, who is the health of our countenance, and our God.

Selected Messages, vol 1, pp. 336-337

D. Responsibilities of Leadership

God requires those to whom He has given sacred trusts to rise to the full height of their responsibilities. Man is placed here in the world on test and trial, and those who are given positions of trust must decide whether they will exalt self, or their Maker; whether they will use their power to oppress their fellowmen, or to exalt and glorify God.

Increased responsibilities bring increased accountability. He who would be a faithful servant must give entire and willing service to the greatest teacher the world ever knew. His ideas and principles must be kept pure by the power of God. Every day he must learn to become worthy of the trust placed in him. His mind must be quickened by the divine power. His character must be uncontaminated by the influence of his relatives, his friends, or his neighbors. At times he must turn aside from active life to commune with God, and to hear His voice saying to him, "Be still, and know that I am God."

The fruits of the Spirit will be borne by the man who loves God and keeps the way of the Lord, as the rich clusters of grapes grow on the living vine. Christ is his stronghold. . . . If he realizes that he cannot do anything without Christ by his side, God will give him wisdom. But he must cherish the love of Christ in his heart, and practice His les-

sons; for is he not to love Christ as Christ loved God? Is he not to demonstrate to all with whom he associates that he has the abiding presence of Jesus Christ more than he has ever had it before? Because of his increased responsibilities he must have an increased knowledge of God, and must reveal that living faith that works by love and purifies the soul.

Testimonies to Ministers, p. 282

E. Power Source Behind Growth

The influence of the Holy Spirit is the life of Christ in the soul. We do not see Christ and speak to Him, but His Holy Spirit is just as near us in one place as in another. It works in and through every one who receives Christ. Those who know the indwelling of the Spirit reveal the fruits of the Spirit–love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith.

SDA Bible Commentary, Vol. 6, p. 1112

F. Success is in the Power Source

"I am the Real Vine and my Father is the Farmer. He cuts off every branch of me that doesn't bear grapes. And every branch that is grape bearing he prunes back so it will bear even more. You are already pruned back by the message I have spoken.

"Live in me. Make your home in me just as I do in you. In the same way that a branch can't bear grapes by itself but only by being joined to the vine, you can't bear fruit unless you are joined with me.

"I am the Vine, you are the branches. When you're joined with me and I with you, the relation intimate and organic, the harvest is sure to be abundant. Separated, you can't produce a thing. Anyone who separates from me is deadwood, gathered up and thrown on the bonfire. But if you make yourselves at home with me and my words are at home in you, you can be sure that whatever you ask will be listened to and acted upon.

John 15:1-27 (MsgB)

APPENDIX FIVE: COMPARISON OF SCRIPTURAL GROWTH LISTS

There are numerous lists in the Bible that have interesting and insightful apparent similarities to the Fruit of the Spirit list in Galatians. The following are two such lists:

A. Fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23) **Compared With the Love Chapter**

G5 NIV	**G5 KJ**	**G5 GREEK**	**1 CORINTHIANS 13**
Joy	Joy	(chara)	"rejoiceth" "hopeth all things"
Peace	Peace	(eirene)	"beareth all things" "endureth all things"
Patience	Longsuffering	(makrothumia)	"suffereth long" "not easily provoked"

Kindness	Gentleness	(chrestotes)	"is kind" "envieth not"
Goodness	Goodness	(agathosune)	"rejoiceth not in iniquity" "thinketh no evil"
Faithfulness	Faith	(pistis)	"believeth all things" "never faileth"
Gentleness	Meekness	(praotes)	"not puffed up" "vaunteth not itself"
Self-Control	Temperance	(egkratera)....	"behaveth not unseemly" "seeketh not her own"

B. Growth Character Ladder (2 Peter 1:5-8) **Compared With the Fruit List (Galatians 5:22-23)**

2 PETER 1	**LINK**	**GALATIANS 5**
FAITH	Same word	FAITH
VIRTUE	Facilitates	GOODNESS
KNOWLEDGE (of God, truth)	Facilitates	PEACE
TEMPERANCE	Same word	TEMPERANCE
PATIENCE	Facilitates	LONGSUFFERING
GODLINESS	Facilitates	GENTLENESS
BROTHERLY KINDNESS	Facilitates	MEEKNESS
CHARITY (agape love)	Same word	LOVE
	Facilitates	JOY

APPENDIX SIX: BIBLE LISTS FOR SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

The Fruit of the Spirit list is only one of several fascinating lists that Bible writers recorded in Scripture for the empowerment of believers. The following are some of the more prominent lists. For the sake of familiarity, all passages are taken from the King James Version.

A. Characteristics of the Blessed (Matthew 5:2-48)

He [Jesus] opened his mouth, and taught them, saying,

1. Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
2. Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.
3. Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.
4. Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.
5. Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.
6. Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.
7. Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.
8. Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
9. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.
10. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

B. Guidelines for Responsible Living, (Romans 12)

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye
1. present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And
2. be not conformed to this world: but
3. be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may
4. prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God. Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us,
5. whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith;
6. ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or
7. he that teacheth, on teaching;
8. he that exhorteth, on exhortation:
9. he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity;
10. he that ruleth, with diligence;
11. he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.
12. Let love be without dissimulation.
13. Abhor that which is evil;
14. cleave to that which is good.
15. Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love;
16. In honour preferring one another;
17. Not slothful in business;
18. fervent in spirit;
19. serving the Lord;

20. Rejoicing in hope;
21. patient in tribulation;
22. continuing instant in prayer;
23. Distributing to the necessity of saints;
24. given to hospitality.
25. Bless them which persecute you:
26. bless, and curse not. Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and
27. weep with them that weep.
28. Be of the same mind one toward another.
29. Mind not high things, but
30. condescend to men of low estate.
31. Be not wise in your own conceits.
32. Recompense to no man evil for evil.
33. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.
34. If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.
35. Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather
36. give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.

Therefore

37. if thine enemy hunger, feed him;
38. if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.
39. Be not overcome of evil, but
40. overcome evil with good.

C. Gifts of the Spirit–Part I (1 Cor. 12:1, 4–11)

Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant. Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the

1. word of wisdom; to another the
2. word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another
3. faith by the same Spirit; to another the
4. gifts of healing by the same Spirit; to another the
5. working of miracles; to another
6. prophecy; to another
7. discerning of spirits; to another
8. divers kinds of tongues; to another the
9. interpretation of tongues: But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.

D. Gifts of the Spirit–Part II (1Corinthians 12:28-31)

And God hath set some in the church,

1. first apostles,
2. secondarily prophets,
3. thirdly teachers, after that
4. miracles, then

5. gifts of healings,
6. helps,
7. governments,
8. diversities of tongues.

Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles? Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret? But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way [see love in 1 Corinthians 13].

E. Characteristics of Genuine Love (1 Corinthians 13:1-13)

Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing. Charity:

9. suffers long;
10. is kind;
11. does not envy;
12. does not parade itself;
13. does not get 'puffed up';
14. does not behave rudely;
15. is not provoked;
16. does not think evilly,

17. nor rejoice in sin;
18. rejoices in the truth;
19. bears all things;
20. believes all things;
21. hopes all things;
22. endures all things.

For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known. And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.

F. Preparation for Spiritual Warfare (Ephesians 6:10-18)

Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your

1. loins girt about with truth, and having on the
2. breastplate of righteousness; and your

3. feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the
4. shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the
5. helmet of salvation, and the
6. sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:

Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.

G. Themes for Mental Contemplation (Philippians 4:8)

1. true;
2. noble;
3. just;
4. pure;
5. lovely;
6. of good report;
7. of any virtue;
8. worthy of praise.

H. Spiritual Perspective for 360–Degree Living (Colossians 3)

If ye then be risen with Christ,

1. seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.
2. Set your affection on things above,

3. not on things on the earth. For
4. ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.
5. Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience: In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them. But now ye also
6. put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communcation out of your mouth.
7. Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have
8. put off the old man with his deeds; And have
9. put on the new man, which is
10. renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him: Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all.
11. Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering;
12. Forbearing one another, and
13. forgiving one another,
14. if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all these things
15. put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness. And

16. let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.
17. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom;
18. teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs,
19. singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And
20. whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.
21. Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord.
22. Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them.
23. Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord.
24. Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged.
25. Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh;
26. not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but
27. in singleness of heart,
28. fearing God: And
29. whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ. But
30. he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons.

I. Things to Flee From and to Follow (1 Timothy 6:3-12)

Things to Flee (vs 3-10)

[v. 11-But thou, O man of God, flee these things]:

1. If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness;
2. He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof
3. cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth,
4. supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself. But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content. But
5. they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.
6. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

Things to Follow (vs 11-12):
1. follow after righteousness,
2. godliness,
3. faith,
4. love,
5. patience,
6. meekness.
7. Fight the good fight of faith,
8. lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.

J. Ladder of Spiritual Development (2 Peter 1:3-11)

According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your:
1. faith virtue; and
2. virtue knowledge;
3. knowledge temperance; and
4. temperance patience; and
5. patience godliness; and
6. godliness brotherly kindness; and
7. brotherly kindness charity.

For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.

Opportunity

This I beheld, or dreamed it in a dream:
There spread a cloud of dust along a plain;
And underneath the cloud, or in it, raged
A furious battle, and men yelled, and swords
Shocked upon swords and shields. A prince's banner
Wavered, then staggered backward, hemmed by foes.
A craven hung along the battle's edge
And thought, "Had I a sword of keener steel —
That blue blade that the king's son bears — but this
Blunt thing — !" He snapt and flung it from his hand,
And lowering, crept away and left the field.
Then came the king's son, wounded, sore bestead,
And weaponless, and saw the broken sword,
Hilt-buried in the dry and trodden sand,
And ran and snatched it, and with battle-shout
Lifted afresh, he hewed his enemy down,
And saved a great cause that heroic day.

Edward Rowland Still

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